31:2/46

6·1

Rūpa Pratirūpa

आम्नाय-ग्रन्थकुल,
रत्ननिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

ाय
ी-५

kar's
ting
dia's
1936
wn in
angā,
nd of
nd to
Her
f the
o an
g the
nbolic
is she
les of
Cave
elevant
tis she
Pandit
m she
manu-
Śilpa
Text
Light
ining
rious
and

अ:2/46

To: Professor Prem Lata Sharma
with gratitude and affection

Bettina
Varanasi
Viśvakarma Pūjā
18.9.82

आम्नाय-[illegible],
[illegible]
वाराणसी-5

Dr. Alice Boner receiving Padma Bhūshan from the President, V. V. Giri, in 1974.

RŪPA PRATIRŪPA

ALICE BONER COMMEMORATION VOLUME

[illegible]
[illegible], [illegible]
[illegible]

Edited by

Bettina Bäumer

BIBLIA IMPEX PRIVATE Ltd.
NEW DELHI

Dr. Alice Boner receiving Padma Bhūshan from the President, V. V. Giri, in 1974.

RŪPA PRATIRŪPA

ALICE BONER COMMEMORATION VOLUME

अ : 2/46
आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,
भरतनिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

Edited by

Bettina Bäumer

BIBLIA IMPEX PRIVATE Ltd,
NEW DELHI

आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,
भरतनिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

© B. Bäumer

May 1982

Price : Rs. 180.00

Photographs were taken with the kind permission of the
Archaeological Survey of India

Published by Sita Ram Goel for Biblia Impex Private Ltd.
2/18, Ansari Road, New Delhi 110002
Printed by Ramashanker Pandya at the Tara Printing Works, Varanasi

आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,
भरतमिलाप, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

रूपंरूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव
तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय ।
ऋग्वेद ६, ४७, १८

He became the original Form of every form ;
It is His Form that is everywhere to be seen.
Ṛg Veda VI, 47, 18

PREFACE

cakṣurno dhehi cakṣuṣe
cakṣurvikhyai tanūbhyaḥ,
saṃ cedaṃ vi ca paśyema ||
susaṃdṛśaṃ tvā vayaṃ
prati paśyema sūrya,
vi paśyema nṛcakṣasaḥ ||
Ṛg Veda X, 158, 4-5

Give sight unto our eye, give thou our
bodies sight that they may see:
May we survey, discern this world.
Thus, Sūrya, may we look on thee, on thee
most lovely to behold
See clearly with the eyes of men.
(Transl. Griffith)

This prayer of the Vedic Rishi can aptly be applied to Alice Boner whose main aim both in the practice of art and in its understanding has been the penetrating vision. The Vedic poet plays on the two prefixes of the verb to see *(paś) : sam* and *vi*, implying the unitive, syn-thetic, overall vision of the totality by the prefix *sam* and the differentiated, discerning, analytic vision of the details in the prefix *vi*. The third prefix he uses with the same verb is *prati*, towards, to look at. The *idam* is everything that can become the object of man's vision, the cosmos as a manifestation of the divine. And this vision is not only realised by the eye alone, nor by the intellect, but the whole body is involved in it, it is a total vision.

The prayer is addressed to the Sun, without whose power neither the all-embracing nor the detailed vision would be possible. It is not by chance that Alice Boner devoted many years of her life to the study of Sūrya and of his magnificent temple at Koṇārka, because the symbolism of Light and of vision was one of her deepest concerns. The expression "human eye" *(nṛcakṣas)*[1] also reminds us of another vision which occupied Alice Boner both as an artist[2] and as a student of

---

1. The *nṛcakṣas* is clearly related to *vi-paś-*, the distinctive seeing. Could one say that *sam-paś-*, the all-embracing vision demands the "divine eye" of the Bhagavad Gītā ?
2. One of the three huge paintings of her "Trilogy" represents *Viśvarūpa*, now exhibited in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, B. H. U., Varanasi.

Indian philosophy, namely Arjuna's vision of the Viśvarūpa, for which he had to receive a "divine eye" *(divya cakṣuḥ)*.[3] Her unique contribution to deciphering the meaning of acient Indian art is due more to her in-sight and vision than to an academic study of art history, although there is a complete balance in her works between the understanding of the totality *(sam)* and the detailed analysis *(vi)*.[4] Her aim in studying and discovering the principles underlying Indian art was also not only academic, but she wanted to awaken the vision of those Indians who are no longer in contact with their own tradition due to Western education and other factors, and of those belonging to other cultures wanting to understand Indian art. The fact that she decided to publish her later works in India, after having published her first two books in Europe[5] (which have hardly been accessible to the Indian readers), was motivated by her intention to make the Indian public conscious of their rich and deep artistic tradition which is so intimately related to their religious and philosophical heritage. She herself expressed her desire in these words : "If my studies could contribute a little towards promoting a less academic, more pointed interest in Indian art and could induce a young generation to look with a more penetrating eye at the splendid heritage of its past, if art-students could start feeling the joy and love emanating from each of these sculptured stones and be awakened to their wordless spiritual message, I would deem it ample reward to all my efforts."

Thus she did not work for the sake of recognition by some European scholars and lovers of Indian art, but for the rediscovery and revival of the Indian tradition where its roots and sometimes even its branches are still alive. Therefore this tribute mostly by Indian scholars to her is a fitting expression of the gratefulness owed to her contribution to the understanding of Indian art.

The present volume was originally intended as a *Festschrift* for Alice Boner's 90th birthday on July 22, 1979, but the planning had started too late. Still it was hoped to bring it out during her life-time so that in her many months of physical immobility but intellectual and spiritual alertness till the very end she could have the joy of this sign of appreciation of her work from scholars of Indian art. She followed the project with great interest but without the least trace of personal pride. Unfortunately the publication was delayed due to the overwork of some of the contributors. Fate decided otherwise, and Alice Boner left us in her 92nd year, on 13th April 1981.

---

[3] Bhagavad Gītā XI, 8.

[4] Cf. Paul Mus, Preface to Alice Boner, *Principles of Composition in Hindu Sculpture* (see Bibliography), p. VII : "Miss Boner...already displayed perceptive and constructive qualities seldom found so happily combined in the same author."

[5] See Bibliography.

Till the last weeks of her life she took an active part in advising me on important points concerning the publication of her last book with which she had entrusted me and which was the culmination and confirmation of her life's work, the *Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad* (to be published soon by Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi). Although she could not see it in published form, she had at least the satisfaction that the text had been completed and accepted by the publisher. She was also happy to know that her work is going to continue, that her basic insights are going to be a guide for further research, and that the many unpublished texts on Śilpaśāstra which are important for the traditional understanding of Indian art, will in the course of time see the light of the day.

The title of this volume: *Rūpa pratirūpa,* originally from the Ṛg Veda, is taken from our common work on the *Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad* because it expresses with the precision of which only the Sanskrit language is capable, the two poles of the creative tension between metaphysics and art, archetype and image, which are so characteristic of Alice Boner's approach to traditional, sacred art, on similar lines as A. K. Coomaraswamy, Stella Kramrisch and others. I try to elucidate its meaning in my own contribution.

The articles contained in this volume[6] reflect a variety of approaches to Indian art, from its theoretical background (Kapila Vatsyayan), its mythological (Stella Kramrisch) and symbolical (Anagarika Govinda) implications, the study of iconography (C. Sivaramamurti, Th. Donaldson, Anand Krishna), style (C. Berkson) and architecture (G. Michell, M. A. Dhaky), to the relation between such different arts as music and painting (A. Danielou, B. N. Goswamy), and finally to the still living traditions of sculpture (S. Rath Sarma) and painting (E. Fischer) in Orissa, to which Alice Boner had dedicated most of her work; it concludes with a study on different traditions of drama (G. Boner), since, according to Bharata's *Nāṭya Śāstra,* all Indian arts have their origin in drama. Thus the wide spectrum of Alice Boner's own interest in the Indian arts is covered at least by some representative articles; a few are also related to her two main places of work, Varanasi and Orissa. It was my desire to get some contribution on the application of her principles of composition to some other sculptures or paintings, but this was not possible in such a short time.

I wish to thank all the contributors for their readiness and collaboration. My thanks are especially due to Sri Alfred Wuerfel who patiently helped me in contacting scholars and collecting articles and whose life-long friendship with Alice Boner made him most qualified for writing on her life; Prof. M. A. Dhaky has given me much of his precious time for advising me on the publication of this book for which I am most grateful; Dr. Georgette Boner who has served her sister with much dedication and love till her end, has also encouraged me very much in this undertaking, Irene R. Ray has kindly revised the English style of most of the papers for which I thank her very much. Last but not least my friend Sri Sita Ram Goel has most generously offered to publish this volume at any cost and without restriction, for which, as well as his unfailing help and kindness, I have no words to express my gratitude.

---

[6] While editing the volume I have tried to unify the transliteration of Sanskrit, but otherwise individual usages of the authors have been kept.

Bettina Bäumer

Varanasi
Dīpāvalī 1981

CONTENTS

Preface		
Alice Boner : On her Life and Work	Alfred Würfel	1
Bibliography Alice Boner		7
Alice Boner and the Indian Arts	Alain Daniélou	9
The Indian Arts—their Ideational Background and Principles of Form	Kapila Vatsyayan	11
Puruṣa and the Origin of Form	Bettina Bäumer	27
The Antelope	Stella Kramrisch	35
A Rare Viśvarūpa	C. Sivaramamurti	41
The Origin of the Buddhist Maṇḍala	Anagarika Govinda	49
An Approach towards examining Style in the Cave Temples	Carmel Berkson	57
The Gupta Style of Sculpture from the City of Banaras	Anand Krishna	87
Nāga Images and the Cult of Manasā in Orissan Art	Thomas Donaldson	99
The 'Royal Centre' and the Great Platform at Vijayanagara	George Michell	109
The 'Praṇāla' in Indian, South-Asian and South-East Asian Sacred Architecture	M. A. Dhaky	119
The Representation of the Rāgas in Pictures, Poems and Numbers	Alain Daniélou	167
Rāgamālā Iconography in the Pahari Tradition	B. N. Goswamy	175
'Hair' and 'Shading' in Paintings from Orissa	Eberhard Fischer	183
A Living Tradition of Śilpa in Orissa	Sadāśiva Rath Śarmā	187
European Reactions to Indian Art	Heinz Mode	189
Is Acting an Art ?	Georgette Boner	193
Index		209

ALICE BONER

(1889—1981)

On her Life and Work

Alfred Wuerfel

The first encounter of Alice Boner with India's art and culture takes us back to even before the early twenties of this century. After studying painting and sculpture in Brussels, Munich as well as in Basel, where she worked under and with the famous Swiss sculptor Burckhardt, Alice Boner had become a full-fledged artist and started independent work as a sculptress, first in her native Switzerland and from 1925 onwards in her studio in Paris. Some of her large sculptures are set up in the University and public parks in Zuerich, in nearby Baden and in private houses. In between, she undertook journeys to Tunesia and Morocco, because than already she was in search of an unsophisticated way of life.

From her earliest youth India had been in her dreams. And when growing up she chanced on the books by E. J. Havell and others, her desire to visit India grew more and more irresistible. Yet, India appeared so far away then and so beyond her reach ! But destiny decreed otherwise and opened up a gate that led her to the country which was to become her home for more than forty years.

It all happened when in 1926 she saw Uday Shankar dancing in Zuerich. He was then touring Europe accompanied by two Italian dancers from the Pawlowa Company. Uday Shankar had previously partnered the famous Russian ballerina in two dances which he had specially created for her. Seeing the composed harmony of Shankar's movements struck the sculptor Alice Boner and it appeared to her, as though statues from Indian temple walls had come to life. Uday Shankar agreed to pose for her, so that she could make of him figurines in clay which were cast in bronze. A few years later Alice Boner met Shankar again, when he gave shows in Paris with his gifted French partner Simkie. However, the recorded music he had to use as accompaniment did not satisfy him. What he greatly desired was to return to India, collect a group of Indian dancers and musicians, buy Indian instruments and costumes which alone would enable him to present to the West authentic Indian music and dancing. This was to be Alice Boner's chance to come to India. She proposed to accompany him and in December 1927 both sailed to Bombay. They travelled through the whole of India, studied many local dance styles and were awe-struck and profoundly inspired by the night-long Kathakali dance-dramas which at that time were widely unknown outside Kerala. And all the while Alice Boner acquired costumes, bought instruments and jewelry and after Uday Shankar had recruited a team of 10 dancers and musicians, they all went to Paris in autumn 1930. Alice Boner had borne most of the expenses and maintained the artists in a house she had rented for them in Paris. In fact, she helped Uday Shankar and his group of artists in every respect. On arrival in Paris in autumn of 1930 Uday Shankar set to work in that house and here his true genius revealed itself to the full, for he not only excelled as a great dancer but as an outstanding choreographer as well. He forged the new members of his group into an artistic unit and trained them so thoroughly that within five months, on the 3rd March 1931 he could give a show in the famous Champs Elisées Theatre which stunned all Paris. This Premiére was the beginning of Uday Shankar's brilliant career. He took Europe and America by storm. An Uday Shankar Company was formed of which Alice Boner became the co-director. For five years she forsook her own work and vocation as a creative sculptress and painter and instead devoted all her time and energy to manage the whole undertaking. She looked after the artists' living and their health. She designed the stage costumes strictly in accordance with authentic Indian originals. She was in charge of publicity, painted posters and negotiated with the impresarios for arranging tournees in various European countries and America. In brief, in doing all this she carried her burden of difficulties and financial risks, but also rejoiced in the tremendous success Uday Shankar met with, wherever he and his artists went and acquainted Western audiences with the beauty of Indian music and dancing hitherto wholly unknown to them. This projection of India's great heritage abroad roused genuine sympathy for her heroic freedom struggle at a time when India needed the moral support of Europe and America. In this Uday Shankar was a great pioneer and Alice Boner supported him in his efforts and thereby contributed in no small measure her share to strengthen India's rightful claim for independence in the eyes of the world. And more than that. The unprecedented success of Uday Shankar abroad reverberated back to India whose public became aware again of the beauty and richness of an art-form that had fallen into disrepute. And in this context too it can truly be maintained that through Alice Boner's close collaboration with Uday Shankar, she assisted him in joining Rabindranath Tagore's efforts to save Indian dance from neglect and to cleanse it from the moral blemishes it had been tainted with by India's society.

It was towards the end of 1935 that Uday Shankar's international fame was firmly established and that the affairs of the Company were running smoothly. So, when in Calcutta the strenuous preparations for another tournee to America had concluded and the artists had left for the States, Alice Boner felt the urge to return to her own work which she had to abandon for so long. Moreover, Uday Shankar had meanwhile conceived the idea of establishing a Culture Centre which he finally succeeded in setting up in Almora. Uday Shankar and Alice Boner then parted company. She went to Banaras and in the beginning of 1936 moved into a house on Assi Sangam overlooking the majestic flow of the Ganga and in this very house she lived more than 40 years till she fell ill towards the end of 1978. The wealth of imagery India daily offered to her eye roused the creative artist in her. She now wanted to express her own vision of India which she loved so dearly. Since sculpture seemed to be too strenuous a process, she took to painting exclusively. She got the room on the top of her house transformed into a large studio and there she set to work. The daily life of the simple people around her, of the pilgrims paying homage to the river and the charm of the country-side inspired her for a long time and filled her canvases. She held exhibitions of such paintings in Calcutta, Bombay, Zuerich and other places. But all the while and as time went on, Alice Boner continued studying India's sacred scriptures and became deeply engrossed in their cosmo-metaphysical concepts which in turn influenced the style and contents of her paintings. Her inner involvement with India's spiritual heritage finally culminated in painting a triptych of Sriṣṭi, Sthiti and Saṃhāra. To give shape to these fascinating and very large compositions containing hundreds of figures Alice Boner laboured for years until she felt she had given adequate shape to the cosmic visions of India's ancient seers. These three large canvases along with other important pictures by Alice Boner are now on display in the Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, the Museum of the Banaras Hindu University.

This perhaps is the proper place to point to the fact that Alice Boner is one of the very few European artists of note whose paintings are influenced by India's cultural tradition. Accomplished painters there have been quite a few, specially in the late 18th and in the early 19th century who like Fraser, Daniell and a number of lesser artists painted charming pictures or engraved quite exquisite etchings of the life and the people of India, but they remained aloof from tradional Indian art, as though it did not exist at all. Or was it that they feared such an overwhelming confrontation ? How is it that in the 19th century art Europe so readily accepted impulses from the Far East, from the Pacific regions, from Africa, Latin America and Mexico, but failed to take cognisance of Indian classical and medieval art the perfection and beauty of which can only be compared with what the ancients in Egypt, Greece, China, Japan and in Latin America created at the very pinnacle of their cultures ? One reason why Indian art did not make any noticeable impact on the West, might be the rich symbolism of its sculptures and paintings which often is too alien to visitors from the West, although their sculptured shapes and painted forms are such as to appeal to any lover of art without even knowing their inner meaning. Although these may be considered some stray thoughts added in parenthesis and deserving closer scrutiny, yet they have a significant bearing on Alice Boner's further groping into the inner essence of India's visual arts. In the pursuit of her aim she not only travelled extensively visiting the great monuments and temples scattered all over

India, but also intensified her studies of India's traditional scriptures and the research work carried out by eminent scholars such as A. K. Coomaraswamy and Stella Kramrisch.

Alice Boner sensed that the numinous depths of Indian art cannot be fathomed and reached through historical research and aesthetic appreciation alone. What then, she asked, is the magic impact these ancient shrines and sculptures exert on the worshipper's heart and mind ? In her long pilgrimage Alice Boner finally reached the gate leading to the understanding of Indian art. It happened in one of the cave temples in Elūrā where she spent weeks and months in studies and contemplation and when one day, in 1947, she intuitively discoverd the principles of composition in Hindu sculpture. It was, in fact, an independent re-discovery of ancient and largely-forgotten principles and concepts of sculpture and architecture. That these findings were later corroborated by palm-leaf manuscripts in Orissa not only gave great satisfaction to Alice Boner, but also encouraged her in carrying out further research, which had started with that momentous realisation while meditating in front of a Viṣṇu image in Elūrā's Cave XV. While she was lost in contemplation the mystery of this relief-sculpture revealed itself to her in an overwhelming vision. It was as though under her very eyes this great Viṣṇu image abstracted itself into a geometrical diagram, into a Yantra as it is called in Sanskrit terminology. And she further saw how the limbs of this image, its iconographical accessories and attendants were arranged centrifugally around a middle-point corresponding to the "Brahmabindu" from which according to India's ancient scriptures the whole manifested universe emanates and into which it withdraws itself again at the end of a cosmic cycle. In the world of sound it is the Mantra that corresponds to the Yantra and Maṇḍala which are its visual counterparts. Like their centre, the *Brahmabindu* around which they revolve and which though spaceless yet contains infinite cosmic expanse, the primordial sound-germ, the *Bīja-Mantra* when chanted strictly in accordance with shastric tradition recreates through its vibrations the whole cosmos and allows its adept to enter its portals. It is however not given to the ordinary pilgrim to comprehend the profound metaphysical truths underlying India's sacred art and architecture. But by encasing him, as it were, within the magic structure of its hidden Yantras and exposing him to the vibrations of mantric hymns his subtle nature is activated and prepared to face the manifested form of his particular Godhead.

An account of her experience in Elūrā and of her subsequent research-work based on it Alice Boner laid down in her first book entitled "*Principles of Composition in Hindu Sculpture*", published by E. J. Brill in 1962. However, she did not rest satisfied with her own personal theories and interpretations, but wanted these to be substantiated through traditional Indian texts. In her tireless search she finally had the good fortune to meet in Puri Paṇḍita Sadāśiva Rath Śarmā who showed her

Alice Boner in Elūrā (Kailāsa) in summer 1938. (Photo Alfred Wuerfel).

Orissan palmleaf manuscripts on temple architecture whose contents go back to the 11th or 12th century and which prove that the ancient masters and architects worked in strict accordance with the traditional rules of the Śilpa Śāstras. Pt. S. R. Śarmā and Alice Boner translated the text to which she added a scholarly introduction. Along with the original Sanskrit text it was published again by E. J. Brill in 1965 and bears the title "*Śilpa Prakāśa*". By now Alice Boner's interest was exclusively focussed on the further exploration of the fundamental concepts underlying the sacred art of India. Thanks to the unremitting search conducted by Pt. S. R. Śarmā more and more ancient texts relevant to this subject came to light. In 1972, Alice Boner and he published in Banaras another book entitled "*New Light on the Sun Temple of Koṇārka*" for which she again wrote a profound introduction. This work is based on four palm-leaf manuscripts which describe the building process of this magnificent edifice along with detailed illustrations of its ground plan and its complete elevation, so that the art historian can now have an exact idea as to what the Sun Temple looked like before the main shrine had tumbled down.

Most of the manuscripts found by Pt. S. R. Śarmā in Orissa are treatises on sculpture and temple architecture, as well as practical manuals written by traditional architects and master craftsmen quite often in simple and even incorrect Sanskrit and exclusively meant for their disciples and members of the artisans' guild. However, a few years ago an extraordinary text has come to light which stands out quite apart from the rest of hitherto known Śilpaśāstras. It belongs to the Atharvavedic tradition and is called the "*Vāstusūtropaniṣad*" and as such is considered to be one of the sixteen branches of upaniṣadic doctrine. This is a text of profound importance, because it explores the fundamental nature of "Form" and its action on the human soul which can attain final liberation through it. It is a different path but leads the seeker to the same goal as the one who tries to reach the Ultimate through meditation or through the chanting of Mantras. The translated text is ready for publication and is preceded by a learned introduction from Alice Boner's pen. As it deals so fundamentally with the function of "Form" as such, its study will be of absorbing interest to all art historians and not only to those specialised in Indian art. To Alice Boner in particular the publication of this ancient upaniṣadic text represented the culmination of her studies and research. Her initial and intuitive findings in Elūrā forty years ago had now found their irrefutable confirmation through Vedic authority.

When in conclusion an attempt is made at summing up Alice Boner's achievements one finds that there are in fact three different though supplementary components which merge in her creative personality. In the beginning the artistic urge in her was predominent. It took shape in her sculptural work which reflects her uncompromising character and reveals a preference for the essential in classical forms. This creative period was interrupted through her association with Uday Shankar for whose benefit Alice Boner had abandoned her own work. However those years of creative passivity were not in vain, for through her cooperation with the great artist that Uday Shankar was she came into ever closer contact with the Indian scene, with its life and its traditional culture. For her it was a period of inner growth which when later on her own again was followed by many productive years of painting in her house on the Ganga in Banaras. But while the artist in her delighted in the outside world of appearances, in its enticing colours and shapes, her mind did not rest satisfied but started out in a quest to probe behind the world of phenomena and to comprehend the abstract principles underlying India's traditional art and architecture. Her intensive preoccupation with the metaphysical background of Indian art had already become evident in the three large canvases of which mention has already been made, but finally became so predominant that she left painting altogether and devoted all her time and energy to research. And while writing on her findings in Elūrā and analysing its sculptures through abstract geometrical grids and diagrams another talent came to the fore. Alice Boner's skill of drawing intricate diagrams and of analysing the elements of a structure and of re-coordinating these in a geometrical pattern runs in her family, for both her father and maternal grandfather were eminent engineers. It is from them that she might have inherited her sense of design, the ability for geometrical abstraction and for discerning the elemental units of a given structure or pictorial representation.

Alice Boner's work and achievements have been those of a pioneer. She had never studied Indian art and its history academically, but approached it pragmatically as an artist who like her Indian fellow-artisans knew how to paint and sculpt. Her practical knowledge of the "trade" combined with a highly sensitive mind and probing intellect helped her not only to appreciate but to finally reach the innermost core of Indian art. In truth, Alice Boner, the artist, transcended the boundaries of her profession and was conscious that the ultimate reality is without form and name. However, she was fully aware that the mission of the traditional artist is to interpret the metaphysical Hindu concepts to the layman through sacred art which to him serves as a bridge to reach the shore beyond.

Alice Boner's devotion to her work made her wholly oblivious of herself. Personal ambition and self-aggrandizement are words missing in her vocabulary. However, it is but natural that she felt happy in finding that her research-work received increasing acclaim in the circle of Indian art historians. And when in 1970 the University of Zuerich conferred on her an honorary doctor's degree on the basis of her publications she felt touched and grateful. But what moved her even more deeply was, when the President of India bestowed the "Padma Bhūṣaṇa" on her in 1974.

Till the very end of her life Alice Boner was engrossed in her work the continuation of which caused her great concern. She, therefore, made arrangements for a Trust to be founded which will enable scholars to carry out research on her lines of approach which has again opened up a gate to the understanding of India's traditional art.

BIBLIOGRAPHY ALICE BONER

I. Books :

1. *Principles of Composition in Hindu Sculpture. Cave Temple Period.* Leiden (E. J. Brill), 1962.
2. Alice Boner and Sadāśiva Ratha Śarmā : *Silpa Prakāśa. Medieval Orissan Sanskrit Text on Temple Architecture.* Leiden (E. J. Brill), 1966.
3. Alice Boner and Sadāśiva Rath Śarmā with Rajendra Prasād Dās : *New Light on the Sun Temple of Koṇārka. Four Unpublished Manuscripts relating to Construction History and Ritual of this Temple.* Varanasi (Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office), 1972.
4. Alice Boner, Sadāśiva Rath Śarmā, Bettina Bäumer : *Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad. The Essence of Form in Sacred Art.* Delhi (Motilal Banarsidass), 1982.

II. Articles :

1. *The Theatre in the Jungle.* Indian Arts and Letters, Vol VII, No. 1 (1933), pp. 37-45.
2. *Kathakali.* Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art (J. I. S. O. A.), Vol. III, No. 1 (June 1935), pp. 61-74.
3. *The Symbolic Aspect of Form.* J. I. S. O. A., Vol. XVII (1949), pp. 42-50.
4. *The Mystery of Sacred Architecture.* Journal of Oriental Research, Madras, Vol. 34-35 (1964), pp. 33-40.
5. *Zur Komposition des Śiva Naṭarāja im Museum Rietberg.* Artibus Asiae, Vol. XXVII, 4 (1964-65), pp. 301-310.
6. *Saudhikāgama on Pañjaras.* V. Raghavan Felicitation Volume, Brahmavidya, Adyar Library Bulletin, Vols. 31-32 (1967-68), pp. 113-124.
7. *Economic and Organizational Aspects of the Building Operations of the Sun Temple at Koṇārka.* Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, Vol. XIII, Part 3 (1970), pp. 257-272.
8. *Extracts from the Śilpasāriṇī.* Studies in Indian Temple Architecture, American Institute of Indian Studies, 1975, pp. 57-79.
9. *Come nacque il libro.* Preface, *Edoardo Giacomo Boner*, Chur, 1980, pp. 7-13.

III. Unpublished Articles :

1. *Decadence of Art in Modern Times.* Lecture delivered delivered at the Kamakothi Peetha, Kanchipuram, in October 1964.
2. *Indian Miniatures.* Opening Lecture at the Exhibition of Indian Miniatures, Venice 1960.
3. *New Light on the Construction of the Sun Temple at Konarka.* Lecture given at the 26th International Congress of Indologists, New Delhi, January 1964.

ALICE BONER AND THE INDIAN ARTS

ALAIN DANIELOU

When I came to India in the thirties in search of great musicians, I often heard about a mysterious Miss Boner who seemed to have been everywhere and to be the first foreigner to promote Indian arts and dance, but who was equally interested in all aspects of art.

Besides the creation of the ballets of Uday Shankar which revealed the Indian dance to the West with a spectacular success in Paris in 1931, Alice was also one of the first to recognize and appreciate the talent of the great dancers of Bharat Nāṭyam, such as Bālā Saraswati and Shāntā Rao, encouraging and supporting them.

It was she also who was interested from the beginning in the endeavour of the poet Vallathol to save the decadent Kathākaḷi.

She made the great musician Alla ud din Khān known to the West. Without her influence Ravi Shankar, who became the disciple of Alla ud din, would probably never have studied music.

Withdrawn in a modest house on the bank of the Ganga at Varanasi, Alice assembled a precious collection of Indian miniatures. Since she was interested in Hindu aesthetics and architecture, she undertook to collect, translate, and publish hitherto unknown manuscripts on architecture, an enormous and difficult task which opens also new horizons on the esthetic theories of the Hindus.

The role of Alice in the rediscovery and reaffirmation of the values of traditional art in India has been considerable, at a time when these values have been contested and threatened by modernism. The role which she played in the artistic life of India has been far greater than she herself in her humility seemed to realize.

THE INDIAN ARTS : THEIR IDEATIONAL BACKGROUND AND PRINCIPLES OF FORM

KAPILA VATSYAYAN

Most writers[1] on Indian aesthetics have so far concerned themselves with the interpretation of the twin theories of *Rasa* and *Dhvani* on the basis of the systems of speculative thought (i. e. *Darśanas*) which followed and not preceded the enunciation of the *Rasa* theory. This has naturally led the writers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to interpret Indian aesthetics through the six systems of the Darśanas.[2]

So much has been written in English and in Indian languages on the subject that it is almost forgotten that Bharata enunciated the theory without the help of these systems at a date prior to these systems, no matter which, upper or lower, dating of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* one may accept as a working basis. At best, his work was contemporaneous and not later.

Obviously Bharata could not have formulated his theories in a vacuum. He refers copiously to his predecessors[3] and repeatedly speaks of the Vedas and the Śāstras. In explicit statement he refers to his formulation as only derived from part psychical and part physiological systems, the word *Rasa* itself being derived from the Cikitsā-śāstra. He takes pains to distinguish his work from the Vedas[4] and stresses its unique although analogous nature. The dependence is acknowledged nevertheless.

While scholars have drawn attention to the existence of the practice of the arts, particularly that of poetry[5] and music and have brought forth massive evidence to prove the high place given to the *kavi* and the recitative and dramatic form seen in the *naraśaṃsī gāthās*,[6] they have not dwelt at length on the world view contained in those early texts in relation to Bharata's formulation. Whenever it has been done it has been attempted through the yardstick of mysticism and the accepted hypothesis that the Indian world view was totally other worldly.

---

1. DE, S. K., *Indian Poetics*.
   RAGHAVAN, V., *The Nine Rasas*.
   PANDEYA, C., *Comparative Indian Aesthetics*, Part I & II.
2. GNOLI, R, *The Aesthetic Experience According to Abhinavagupta*.
   HIRIYANNA, M., *Art Experience*.
3. *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Chapter I.
4. *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Chapter I.
5. There is a vast body of critical literature on the subject, including Raghavan, Agrawala, De, Keith, Pandeya and many others.
6. *Ṛg-Veda*.

This paper attempts to identify the primary sources in which this world view is embodied and to establish the relationship of the parts to the whole in the artistic traditions of India, both in theory and practice. To do this, one of several avenues could be followed ranging from an examination of the purely metaphysical and the cosmological to the speculative systems; finally one could analyse the language and imagery which is used to communicate these principles and the methods utilized to correlate the microcosm with the macrocosm. While all these avenues could be profitably explored, we have limited ourselves here to the imagery which has been used, so as to bring home the parallel and related phenomenon of describing the macrocosm through the finite concretization of the human body, particularly the senses, on the one hand, and the use of diverse physical media to suggest or evoke the infinite, on the other.

First and foremost is the concept of man in relation to habitat, physical environment, nature, animal world and the activities of the mind and the senses.[7] The primary concept which governed all these speculations was *Ātman* and *Brahman*. The innumerable interpretations of this concept, except that of the schools of materialism, Cārvāka and a few others, give special place to the *Ātman*. All relate it to the four material elements of earth, water, fire, and air. Even Cārvāka believed that these elements came together and constituted a particular structure although without spirit. The others believed that the creation of man was through the spirit but was manifested in the elements. Be that as it may, we find that *Ātman* is a central principle of the concept of man in both Vedic and Upaniṣadic thought. In the latter, *Ātman* is conceived as dynamic, full of consciousness, but with the possibility and indispensable necessity of returning to stillness—sometimes termed as a static eternity. But the question may well be asked : How is man (or *puruṣa*; the word used in early Vedic thought) created ?[8] The words used are *kāma* and *kratu*. These two words are central to the thinking processes : the first represents the activity of wishing or desiring, and the second of a sacrifice, *tapas* in short, of discipline—demanding objectivity and detachment at the very moment of the act of creation. Thus man acquires special significance both as a biological-psychical unit, and as the essence of Man, i. e. humanity *per se*.

The Vedic writer is fully conscious of the purely physical reality of biological man. Repeatedly his organs are described. Nārāyaṇa, who is also the author of the *Puruṣa-sūkta*, (R. V. X. 90), describes vividly the organs, limbs, and all other parts of the human body and enumerates the bones, veins, and arteries. The *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, again, speaks of the body in III. 13, and in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* we come across it again in the discussion of the *pañca kośa*.[9] This is repeated in other places. Here man's nature, from the most physical to the psychical is delineated. The physical is directly produced by food, and contains in itself the senses. This physical man breathes, thinks, feels, and resolves;[10] he is alive and conscious and is the vehicle of the man who knows and can reflect, i. e. the psychical man; and finally there is he who transcends both the physical and psychical to achieve the mystical state of *ānanda* or pure bliss.

---

[7] RAJU, P. T., *Concept of Man*, edited by S. Radhakrishnan, p. 218.

[8] *Atharva Veda* X, 2, 1-8.

[9] *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, VI, 1.

This man, consisting of sixteen digits, presents a picture of a biological and psychic being and also suggests that he can transcend both these aspects. He is related to nature, the elements, and animal and plant life. The environment in which he lives is not an alien environment. He always considers it his own, where he is like all other breathing life, but endowed with the special faculties of self-reflection and speech. Indeed, man is constantly seen as an embodiment of the elements and forces of nature and in relationship with animal and plant life. This gives the world a different character from that implied in the idea of evolution. Man is not the best because he overpowers and conquers nature and is thus the fittest to survive, but he is one amongst many with a capacity for consciousness and transcendence of his pure physicality through psychical discipline.

If these are the bare bones of the conception of man in relation to his physical and ecological environment, let us see what are his capacities for comprehending the universe through his special faculties. Much of Vedic thought and also a great part of the Upaniṣads are couched in language which is indicative of awareness of physicality, in spite of the overpowering evidence that these texts are aimed at *transcendence*.[11]

Indeed, an examination of the imagery of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads shows that senses and sense perceptions play an all-important role, both in themselves and as vehicles of communicating the 'formless' and the beyond form (*arūpa* and *pararūpa*).

Apart from the *Puruṣa-sūkta* already quoted, there are the *Yajur-veda* and the *Atharva-veda* which are replete with references to the senses. Without pausing to delineate the details of these references, let us pass on to the text of the relevant Upaniṣads. The *Kena Upaniṣad* calls for the perfection of all the faculties of the body—speech, hearing, sight, and for the strength of all the senses (*indriyāṇi*). And all this is advocated for what purpose? The sole purpose is—not to be cut off from *Brahman*. He is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech, the life of life (breath), the eye of the eye,[12] and yet beyond all these. The dialogue repeats this imagery of the eye, ear, and mind throughout. Although Brahman is formless and unmanifest, It is only accessible to us by means of the senses or intellect, and expresses therefore 'Absolute knowledge'. It is manifested through multi-media, each inter-related. Two processes are suggested : one, sheathing and overlaying; and the other, an organic interrelatedness. Through either of these, consciousness of the 'unmanifest' is experienced through the senses, shining forth in an instant and disappearing like the twinkling of a star.[13] The section ends with a significant verse (*Kena* IV, 8) which states that the means for its attainment is primarily the capacity for restraint and discipline of the senses, subduing them through *tapas*. Here, then, is a key to the approach to the body and the senses : although important and indispensable vehicles, they must be restrained, subdued, and kept under control. The accepted view that Indian speculative thought is world or physicality-denying has to be greatly modified when we observe that the vehicle is as important as the destination. The actuality of sense perception and its vital role in a framework of discipline, restraint, and control is repeatedly stressed.

---

[10] SHARMA, S., "The concept of Man in the Vedas and Upanishads," paper in the seminar on *Concept of Man*. Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, p. 3 (unpublished).

[11] RAY, N. R., *An Approach to Indian Art*, Chapter I.

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* the idea is developed further from another point of view. Now the world is compared to a fig tree whose root is upwards and whose branches go downwards.[14] Then occurs the verse in which a hierarchy is set down (VI, 7) : "Higher than the senses (and their objects) is the mind, more excellent than the mind (*manas*) the intellect *(sattvam)* : above the intellect soars the great soul (*mahānātmā)* and more excellent than the great one is the unmanifested *(avaktya)*. And higher than the unmanifested is the soul *(puruṣa* here) which is all-pervading and without sense".[15] This verse has to be understood naturally along with the oft-quoted verse of the third *Vallī* where the same idea is explained through the metaphor of a chariot. "Know the soul (the embodied soul, *ātman)* as the rider, the body (*śarīra*) the chariot, the intellect (*buddhi)* the charioteer, and mind (*manas)* as the reins: the senses are the horses, their objects are the roads on which they wander. The experience is the soul *(ātman)* endowed with the body, senses, mind and intellect."[16] While a hierarchy is clearly suggested, once again the indispensable role of the senses and the body is not obliterated, for no chariot can run without horses, only the horses must be controlled; they cannot afford to be unruly and unharnessed. The wise person thus always applies his mind, has the senses subdued like the good horses of the chariot, and the intellect *(buddhi)* is the charioteer.[17] Finally comes an injunction similar to the one in *Kena Upaniṣad*, "Let the wise subdue his speech by mind, subdue his mind by that nature which is knowledge (intellect), subdue his knowledge in the great soul, subdue this in the peaceful soul."[18] One could add countless other references of a similar nature from the other Upaniṣads. (*Muṇḍaka* II, 1 etc.). What is important to note is that at no place is there any indication that the senses are unreal or even unimportant. Instead, there is always the recognition that there is the possibility of externalizing them and an equal possibility of internalizing them.

---

[12] *Kena Upaniṣad* I, 1.

[13] *Kena Upaniṣad* IV, 4.

[14] *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* V.

[15] *Ibid.*, VI, 6-7.

[16] *Ibid.*, VI, 3-4.

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* clarified this further in the fourth *Vallī*. There it points out that the senses turn to external objects and therefore man sees only these objects, not the internal soul (*antarātman*) but the wise one, with eyes 'inwards' and desirous of immortality, beholds the absolute soul (IV, 1). Again the twin possibilities, that the senses may be turned to look outward or inward, are clearly suggested. The one who has turned inward, and has experienced the formless, can see clearly the world of form (*rūpa*), of taste, experience (*rasa*), smell (*gandha*) and of love (*maithuna*) (IV, 3). Here then is the second key to the world view. The world form (of *nāma* and *rūpa*) is an actuality to be comprehended but not to be involved in. One could go on adding examples and references, but the few cited here should make it amply clear that in the discussion of the 'Absolute' at no time are the body and the senses denied. Matter and mind, sense and spirit are not in opposition but are complementary. It is in this framework that the concept of *Yoga* is first enunciated in this Upaniṣad (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* VI, 2).

Now let us move on to the correlation which is established between the senses and the phenomena outside. The senses, harnessed with the constant possibility of looking outward or inward, form one stream of speculation; the other is the establishment of a series of correlatives with energy and the elements. The first chapter of the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* of the *Ṛg-veda* describes the creation of the universe, the creation of the worlds, of the soul, and of the mundane egg of the gods (*virāṭ*, *prajāpati*); it describes the creation as the parts of man as the microcosm of the universe, and of food for the preservation of the world. "He created the three spheres of water, sunbeams, and death. He took out from the waters a being of human shape, formed him and created him by the heat of his meditation *(tapas)*." Here the mouth is equated with speech which in turn is equated with *agni*. The nostrils are equated with breath and then with *vāyu*. The eyes are equated with sight and thus with sunshine and light *(āditya)*. The ears are equated with hearing and the four quarters of the universe; the skin burst forth; from the skin proceeded hairs, and from hairs, herbs and trees. The heart is equated with mind, and the mind with the moon.

---

[17] *Ibid.*, VI, 7.

[18] *Ibid.*, VI, 13.

The navel is equated with vital air which goes downwards, and finally with death. The circle is completed by the organ of generation from which the seed is born, and from the seed the *waters.*[19]

We thus have here the human body and its senses, the microcosm, in its relation to the parts of the universe, namely, space, the elements, fire *(agni)*, light (sun), water, earth and moon; in short, the macrocosm. The converse process is suggested in section two, where it is said that fire becomes speech, entering the mouth; wind becomes breath, entering the nostrils; the sun becomes sight, entering the eyes; the quarters become hearing, entering the ears; the annual herbs and regents of the forest become hairs, entering the skin, the moon becomes mind, entering the heart; death becomes vital air, going downward and entering the navel; and water becomes seed, entering the organ of generation (II, 4). The relationship of parts to the whole, of a multiple to the one, and of the finite to the infinite is clear and needs no comment, although hundreds of commentaries have been written. The natural extension is to explore whether any of the parts can have an independent existence and are self-sufficient in themselves. The third section devotes itself to this question and comes to the conclusion that they are all interdependent and that they are, in their single state, incapable of comprehending the whole.

The totality of the experience of life is conceived of in two ways—one, as the experience (the *bhoktā*) and the seer (*draṣṭā*), a concept which occurs in the *Muṇḍaka*[20] and elsewhere; and the other as the three states (*avasthā*) namely the waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. Again the metaphor is inverted, for what is considered waking is really sleeping, and what is considered deep sleep (*turya*) is, indeed, waking (*Praśna*) IV, 2). The relationship of nature, of the formless in the form of the human body[21] is the essence of this conception.

The *Praśna Upaniṣad* considers the three states at greater length.[22] It also gives another statement of the different principles of creation, namely, the five subtle and gross elements (earth, water, light, air, and ether), the five organs of intellect, the five organs of action with their respective objects, the mind, intellect, self-consciousness, thinking, life, etc. This series is in the inverse order from those given in the *Kena* and the *Kaṭha*. Here, too, although not so clearly stated, is an order of dependence of parts from the eye to the mind, and the parts are arranged largely according to their dependence upon each other. *Āditya* is extolled here as the life-giver, he penetrates the eastern, southern, western quarters, all intermediary quarters and thus takes all creatures up into his rays.

---

[19] *Aitareya Upaniṣad* I, 1.

[20] *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* III, 1, 1 and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* IV, 1.

[21] *Praśna Upaniṣad* I, 3, 13.

[22] *Praśna Upaniṣad*, III.

It is this vision which formulates itself in the concept of the *Viśvarūpa*.[23] This life, the soul of all creatures (*Vaiśvānara*) and the nature of all the life, rises as the fire (every day making the quarters like himself) and finally he, who is known as the nature of all, as the maker of all, the omniscient (*jātavedas*), as the supreme support, as the performer af austerities, *tapas*, he who sheds a thousand rays, and dwells in life a hundred fold in those creatures.[24]

A whole cosmology of the *Viśvarūpa* is graphically presented in the verses which follow. The feet are the seasons, and the twelve months, the atmosphere and directions are mentioned (*Praśna* I. 6, 11-13). The continuous motion of the sun and of life is thus another way of stating the cyclic concept of time expressed eloquently elsewhere. (*Praśna* IV, 7)

A reading of this Upaniṣad again brings home the vital relationship between senses, body, mind, and soul. The Upaniṣad ends with the significant conception of all the parts being annihilated in the whole.[25] As flowing rivers merge into the sea, so the sixteen parts (*ṣoḍaśa-kala* is the word used) are annihilated when they reach the Puruṣa. Then occurs the memorable verse : "Let men know the Spirit, who ought to be known, in whom the sixteen parts abide, as the spokes of a wheel rest in the nave. Know Him in order that death may not pain you".[26] There is also the telling simile of the sun and its rays.

Thus we have in the Upaniṣads the recurring metaphor of the chariot and the wheel, the sun and its rays, the senses and body and their correlation with the macrocosm. The concepts of time and space, of externalization and internalization, are repeatedly stressed. The one guiding pivot is the concept of the formless and the multiple form, of the one and the many and the relationship of the parts to the whole. *Śvetāśvatara* IV, 1, etc.) The body is the vehicle through which to experience the formless. It is only the controlled internalization of the senses which results in the key concept of *Yoga*. One should also draw attention to other vital concepts such as the *guṇas* contained in the Upaniṣads.

Thus we find that the Upaniṣads conceive of the human body, with its organs, as a living symbol of the organic relationship of the parts to the whole. Each part is related to the others and all are interdependent. The senses are important, for they are vehicles of both externalization and internalization. This man-body is placed in a universe of *bhūtas*, *guṇas*, *puruṣārthas*, and *diśās*. The images revolve round the

---

23. *Praśna Upaniṣad*, I, 7-8.
24. *Ibid.*, I, 8.
25. *Ibid.*, VI, 5.
26. *Ibid.*, VI, 6.

universal invariables, water, earth, fire, and sky principles. Further, the body is placed in a circle, with sixteen spokes and a periphery or circumference, held together by the nave of the wheel, *cakra*, or the navel of the body. The centre vibrates and creates the whole and in turn annihilates it. The process goes on eternally. Time is cyclic, without beginning and end. This gives rise to the images of the snake eating its own tail, the two fishes, the unbroken line of eternity, of intertwined snakes, and, finally, the *damaru* with intersecting cones, symbolizing time past, present, and future in artistic terms. The verticality of the physical man is the symbol of life, the *stambha*, with planes, and directions. The *stambha* again represents life emanating from the waters, and rising upward to the sky (*Atharva-veda* X, 7).

The radii of the circle are time with the sixteen digits, or spokes of the wheel, and the nave or navel as the centre. Many principles can be comprehended within the image of the circle, and the radii, or spokes, the circumference, and the segments of space contained within it. Other images, such as the chariot, the sun and its rays, have obvious significance and have penetrated all levels of thought in India.

To this has to be added that which is concretized and elaborated upon only in the *Brāhmaṇas*. The key concept here, as in the Vedas, is the *yajña*—translated inadequately as 'sacrifice'. A close scrutiny of the rituals described in the *Ṛg-veda*, the *Yajurveda*, and finally the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, make it amply clear that the ritual was concretization of the abstraction contained in the Upaniṣads. The two have to be seen together and as complementary to each other. Once again, we find the concept of the senses, the purified body, the symbolic lighting of the fire (*agni*), the consecration of the earth, the pouring of water, and the establishment of the relationship of the body with the quarters, the spheres, and the cosmos. The correlatives are established assiduously, and a whole structure of physical activity is built with the sole purpose of annihilating the parts into the whole. The *Agnicayana*, the *Aśvamedha*, the *Puruṣamedha*, however different they may be, are identical in stressing the objective of the sacrifice as a vehicle of transcendence. Although we cannot here elaborate in minute detail the different phases and aspects of a *yajña*, it is clear that the ritual is meaningful only because it represents, in the particularity of the act, the universal and timeless.[27]

---

[27] See CALAND W. & HENRY V., *L' Agniṣṭoma : Description complete de la forme normale du sacrifice de soma dans le culte vedique*, Paris, 2 volumes (1906).

DANDEKAR, R. N. & KASHIKAR, C. A. & others. *Śrautakośa Encyclopaedia of Vedic sacrificial ritual*, Poona 1958, 1970.

GONDA, J., *Ursprung and Wesen des indischen Brahma*, Leiden 1943.

HEESTERMAN, J. C., "Vrātya and Sacrifice". Indo-Iranian Journal 6 (1962), pp. 1-37.

PARPOLA, A., *The Literature and study of the Jaiminīya Sāmaveda in retrospect and prospect*, Helsinki.

This then, is the nature of the speculative thought, its language, imagery, and ritual, that existed before Bharata formulated his theory. He brought together into one fold the essential elements of this speculative thought, particularly the detailed system of correlation of the senses, body, mind, and soul on the one hand, and, on the other, the elaborate structure of the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas, in order to show another path to the experience of the formless, the *Brahman*, through the world of *nāma* and *rūpa*.

Without explicitly stating so, he makes it clear that what he has set out to do is to present, through the processes of impersonalization, a picture of the world of the senses. Taking the senses and the body, their correlation established with the macrocosm results in a system of impersonalizing emotion and thus evokes the intangible formless and the 'beyond form', through the very presentation of form. *Rasa* in its aspect of transcendance, however transitory, and in its aspect of concretization through the eight, or nine *Rasas*, is the method of this impersonalization. In short, aesthetics is the path of the cultivation and chiselling of the senses. It includes evolution towards increasing subtlety and refinement. There has been so much discussion on the *Rasa* theory and its varied interpretations that it is not necessary to go into it here. What is necessary, however, is to point out the salient features of the elements which go to make up the whole. Behind it all is, as Hiriyanna rightly points out, the assumption : "The world of sense, equally with the world of thought, is but an appearance of the ultimate truth—an imperfect expression of it but yet adequate, if rightly approached, to point to the underlying unity. Neither our senses nor our mind can grasp this unity but so much of it as they can grasp is sufficient to find out its true meaning and realise it within ourselves."[28]

We have already drawn attention to the term *ānanda* used in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. To quote Hiriyanna again, this word is 'the clue to the aesthetic theory of Vedānta'. He refers to another concept, that of the *jīvanmukta*, which does not occur in the Upaniṣads, but one which is central for an understanding of the Indian viewpoint in aesthetics. Our concern, however, is not with the philosophic interpretation of the theory by others but with the text itself. For this, we have necessarily to return to the formulations of Bharata in the context of theatre and of the other arts, although they were formulated somewhat later, particularly architecture, sculpture, and painting. Bharata himself takes good care of poetry, words *(śabda, artha)*,

---

STAAL, J. F. "Report on Vedic rituals and recitations." *Year Book of the American Philosophical Society*, 1963, pp. 607-611. Also see unpublished report on the Agnicayana ritual held in Kerala.

Of special significance are the *Taittirīya* and the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇas*. Also see *Śukla Yajurveda* X, 7 for pillar (*stambha*) and XVII, I-II.

[28] HIRIYANNA, M., *Art Experience*, p. 6

sound, music *(saṅgīta)* and dance *(nṛitya, nāṭya)* and often refers to architecture and sculpture.

We have to be careful, however, to avoid taking the help of later interpretations and commentaries on the text. The text alone must be examined against the background of early speculative thought, and not as interpreted by the great commentators, such as Bhamba, Ānandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, or Udbhaṭṭa.

So, then, why was the Nāṭya-veda created ? It was created in response to a request from the gods, gandharvas, and yakṣas : "We want an object of diversion which must be audible and visible".[29] We are back to the eye and the ear of the Upaniṣads, where the two organs play a significant role in all cognitive experience. Then, too, Indra went into a state of *yoga* recalling the four Vedas.[30] Obviously both the eye and the ear—and the state of internalization of the senses, i. e. of *yoga*—are highly contextual terms which cannot be understood without the aid of all that we have considered *vis-à-vis* the Upaniṣads. Bharata is fully aware of this, for the very next verse sets out the objectives of this fifth Veda, "which will be conducive to duty (*dharma*), wealth (*artha*) and will present the learning of the Śāstras for all these actions (*sarvakarma*) and will review all the arts and crafts."[31]

In saying this, Bharata clearly lays down the precise relationship between what he has to say and what has preceded his theory in speculative thought, both in the context of the four *puruṣārthas* and in the multidisciplinary aspects of the arts. Its ethical import and also its pure aesthetic context are clearly enunciated. In an oft-quoted verse he elaborates further by specifying the elements he has culled from each of the Vedas, taking words (*pāṭhya*) from the *Ṛg-Veda*, acting (*abhinaya*) from the *Yajur-Veda*. song (*gīta*) from the *Sāma-Veda*, and the emotions (*rasa*) from the *Atharva-Veda* (N. S. B. I, 17-18). He acknowledges his debt to the Vedas and the Upavedas. Now, most critics have slurred over this portion of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* as being no more than lip service to the Vedas so frequent in Indian writing. A closer reading of these verses, along with what follows, shows that Bharata was very carefully stating, however aphoristically, a fundamental principle, namely, that the life of thought of the Vedas and the Upavedas was not dissociated from the life of feeling, of culture, of emotions, of senses and the body, and its multiplicity of expression.

It is important to note that, in spite of his statement that he has culled all these elements from the Vedas, when it comes to the business of actual performance he does not find the gods fit enough to understand it or make use of them.[32] Indeed, a whole new class of life has to be created. Why? Obviously, Bharata was not referring to the Indo-Aryans, as has been held by some,[33] but he was indeed pointing to the fact that the Arts, like any other discipline, required training, practice, will and desire. No wonder, then, they, the rishis or munis who have kept their vows (*vrata*), are alone capable of comprehending the fifth Veda and putting it into practice (*prayoga*).[34]

---

[29] *Nāṭyaśāstra*, I, 13, given in parenthesis by the Baroda Gaekwad Series—since he considers it an interpolation.

[30] *Nāṭyaśāstra*, I, 13-14.

[31] *Ibid.*, I, 15.

Bharata then proceeds to enact the ritual of the drama by first installing the *jarjara* and *dhvaja*. The overpowering significance of the *yūpa* in the context of *yajña*, and the establishment of the *stambha* is well known. In the context of drama, it acquires the same significance of identifying a centre and of using it as a symbol of success and of fruitfully completing the ritual of the drama. The rest of the chapter lays emphasis on the *pūjā* to the stage and speaks of the presentation of theatre as a *yajña*.[35] The symbol of the *stambha*, the consecration of earth, the importance of water—all these recall what we have noticed in the Upaniṣads.

A reading of Chapters I and II (where the erection of the theatre building and the stage is described) clearly lays the foundation of what is to follow in the analysis of the diverse media of expression, namely words, sound, movement of the human body, and *tāla*. In propitiating the different directions and the deities of each of the directions, the *mattavārni*, the pillars, and the two levels of the stage, Bharata is doing exactly what was done both by the Upaniṣads and by the Brāhmaṇas, namely, establishing the relationship of the physical to the psychical and metaphysical on the one hand, the limited physical space being made into a symbolic design (like the *vedika* of the *yajña* in the Vedas), and, on the other hand, considering those who perform on it not as particular individuals portraying subjective emotion, but as single entities who represent parts of an organic whole. The relationship between the microcosm is once again underlined and unless this basic objective is kept in view the *Nāṭyaśāstra* sounds, like many other subsequent texts of the arts, a jumble and medley of technical details.

The chapters which follow can be regrouped from the point of view of analysing word, sound, human body and rhythm, in order once again to stress the disciplined use of the senses, and the possibility of their expression outward and external, on the one hand, and, on the other, the methods of internalizing these very senses, so as to arrive at the same experiential truth of the state of *ānanda* mentioned in the Upaniṣads. In this respect, the basic postulates of early speculative thought—the

---

32. *Ibid.*, I, 21-22.
33. See GHOSH, Man Mohan, foot-note to translation, Vol. I, p. 5.
34. *Nāṭyaśāstra* I, 23, see two readings given by Gaekwad Series.
35. *Ibid.*, I, 122-124.

particular being an aspect of the universal, the formless expressing itself in a multiplicity of forms (with the ever-present consciousness that the forms lead to the annihilation of the individual in the one formless and beyond or transform—and the establishment of the relationships and correlatives permeate considerations in aesthetics in all the arts, and result in an underlying unity of spirit, content, form, and technique. Indeed, it is these principles which then make the arts interdependent and interconnected on all levels. The concept of sixteen *kalās* recalls the sixteen spokes of the wheel, and becomes a central principle.

In a brief paper of this kind, one can do no more than point to a few elements in each of the arts at the level of spirit, content, and form to show that unless the Upaniṣadic world view and the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas are taken into account, the aesthetic theory and art traditions of India seem complex without being meaningful. Except Coomaraswamy,[36] and to an extent Dr. Stella Kramrisch, few art historians have paid attention to the fundamentals which govern the artistic traditions. Most others have concerned themselves with the 'specifics' of the art medium or have only commented on technique. However, both Dr. Coomaraswamy and Dr. Kramrisch have interpreted Indian art only through its mystical objective and not through the methodologies. Dr. N. R. Ray has, in a recent work, rightly pointed to the *lokāyata* traditions. But he, too, does not identify the elements in the great Upaniṣadic tradition itself which points to the organic relationship of senses and body to that which transcends them. Also, he distinguishes the sense of form from *yantra* or perfect design. Indeed, the two are intimately related.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VIII)-I, 1-3) speaks of the *antarhṛdaya ākāśa* (space in the heart) which is the totality of the ideal space at the core of our being, where only the full content of life can be experienced. In the context of the arts that essence of life is the realization of beauty in perfect form, when perfect concord[38] (*samatva*) takes place between seer and seen. The artist shares this vision, and it is this which gives him a world view which is totally different from what is described in other traditions as 'descriptively representational'. The image-maker in India must realize a complete self-identification, in whatever fashion, with this psychical internalization of sense perceptions. Reality assumes a different meaning, and the perfect form is the model of his inner vision which he then begins to give expression to through external form or forms. The maker of an icon is thus a practitioner of *Yoga*, wherein are eliminated the distracting influences of trivial transitory emotions and externalized particularities. The mind produces or draws (*ākarṣiti)* this form : the word itself recalls the Vedic word *kāru* which stand for a maker, artisan, a singer

---

36. COOMARASWAMY, A. K., *Transformation of Nature in Art*, pp. 5-6.
37. RAY, Nihar Ranjan, *An Approach to Indian Art*, p. 4.
38. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV, 2-3.

of hymns and so on. We must also remember that the word *rūpakāra* used much later (in the *Mahāvastu*) once again underlines this particular faculty of the artist. He is the experiencer, but also the seer with detachment. In short, he too, like his Vedic counterpart, sees, hears, feels, but above all reflects and through the 'heat of his meditation' creates multiple forms only to suggest the formless and beyond form.

The Indian artist's concern is thus with 'Form' in the abstract, as design imbued with a surcharged consciousness of the totality. He gives this form many forms, always bearing in mind the inner state in which he saw the perfect Form. The technique of the particular arts is the methodology of evoking a similar psychical experience in the spectator or listener. He does this through impersonalization of the subjective. Indeed, his content is this impersonalized emotion. We can, indeed, postulate that this process of impersonalization of emotions will inevitably lead to a sense of abstract design. The imagery of the Upaniṣads and the elaborate ritual of the Brāhmaṇas is the ground plan for each of the arts, be it architecture, sculpture, painting, music, dance, or drama. The artist thus repeats and perfects this imagery by giving it concrete shape in stone, sound, and movement.

Attention has been drawn to these fundamentals of technique in *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts.*[39] Here an attempt has been made to analyse the technique of evolving *Rasa* through diverse media. That detailed analysis is not being repeated here. For the present, it is only necessary to point out that if the technique of each of the arts is broken up we find that the fundamentals of the techniques repeatedly draw attention to the relationship of Man with the Cosmos, and of Man with Nature, in exactly the same way as the Upaniṣadic seers saw the verticality of Man set in the framework of a circle with directions. The body of Man is the one diameter of the wheel *(cakra)* with sixteen spokes, and the still centre, or the nave of the wheel, is the navel of the body. The diameters represent the principles of the elements, earth, water, fire, and sky. The verticality represents the axis of the *brahma-sūtra,* so fundamental to the traditions of all the Indian art forms.

In architecture, it is seen both in the ground plan and the elevation plan. In either, one moves from the concrete to the abstract, from below upwards, from earth to sky, and from the outside to the inside, from outer darkness to inner light. Each part is related to the whole and the externalization leads to internalization of the senses, to a formless stillness collecting back to the centre.

In the case of sculpture also, a still centre is established along the two main axes; other vertical and horizontal axes are drawn to make the cage *(piñjara)*, all held together within a circumference. The cage is a basic motif and the word itself is significant at all levels.

---

[39] VATSYAYAN, Kapila, *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts,* Introduction.

In music, within the circle are triangles intersecting where the base of the *Śrutis* and *svaras* ultimately lead to the timeless eternity of the apex. The image of the *damaru* is repeated with the tonic, the *sama* of *tāla* being the still centre. The parts are related to the centre and to each other in a cyclic movement in the same manner as a hierarchy of the different aspects of senses, body, mind, and intellect and consciousness, was established in the Upaniṣads.

In music correlatives are established, with the *śrutis* and *svaras* as units, to nature, animal life, and the deities. This is analogous to the description in the Upaniṣads of each of the senses representing different elements (*bhūtas*), qualities (*guṇas*), and aspects of the universe. It is significant that, while describing the different *svaras*, once again the imagery of the body is used; it is said that each of the *svaras* resides in a different part or limb of the body.[40]

In contrast, sculpture, icons, and dance deal with the body itself. Here, the imagery of the Vedas and the Upaniṣads is translated into concrete principles of form. Instead of suing the imagery of the body and the senses to communicate the nature of the cosmos and the macrocosm, the body and the senses are impersonalized, almost abstracted, into pure design to suggest and evoke in the hearer and the onlooker the idea of the universal, the cosmic, and the infinite. The circle with sixteen spokes with a centre, the square with opposite lines meeting in points, and rhythmic movement within the periphery of a circle become its central motifs. The formal elements of these arts are directly derived from this conceptual background where the physical, biological realities are comprehended only to take us back to the consciousness that the human body and the senses are the necessary vehicles to evoke the state of beatitude and an awareness of perfect form and, finally, beyond form or transform (i. e. *para-rūpa*), particular features, individual characteristics, cease to have literal meaning, and correspondence between the physical is again established. Thus the hasic anatomical structure, with the spinal cord as the central vertical median and the upper outstretched limbs as the main horizonal axis, represent the physical and psychical reality. These are held together by a centre, usually corresponding to the navel (or nave of the chariot wheel) and the periphery of space is enclosed by an imaginary circumference. The balance of the vertical and horizontal medians gives rise to the elaborate structure of medians vertical and horizontals (*sūtras*) and the deflections (*bhaṅgas*). The cage (*pañjara*) is made up of the intersection of the verticals and horizontals and their corresponding emotive value. Indian sculpture and painting both evolve a complete vocabulary of lines (*rekhā*) and there is much discussion on the nature of the line (*rekhā*)—whether vertical ascending (*ūrdhva*) or horizontal extended (*pārśva*) or diagonal (*trayaka*) or crooked (*vakra*). The sculptor looks at the human form in terms of these verticals and horizontals and establishes an invariable, a centre or a *bindu*, from which all movements flow outward and collect inwards. Thus what has been interpreted by most art historians as a complex and arbitrary system of proportion and balance is indeed the translation of the imagery of early speculative thought into a formal language of art. Indian iconography has also been largely understood as the representation of different aspects of gods and goddesses, and human beings and their analysis has been restricted to an identification of the context and the implements. While this analysis is valid on one level, the underlying principles of the three types of posture (i. e. *sthānaṣ*, reclining, sitting, standing), the different units to suggest enlarging and dwarfing (the *talas*), the many different qualities (i. e. the *guṇas* of the *sāttvika, rājasika* and *tāmasika*) are all deduced from the conceptual thought and its resultant principles of form in terms of basic geometrical motifs. The square, the inverted triangles, the spokes of a wheel held together by a nave, or navel, and the circumference become the common and universal vocabulary of the artistic technique.

---

[40] VATSYAYAN, Kapila, *Ibid.*, chapter I.

One could give a thousand examples from all periods of Indian art, belonging to Buddhist, Jaina, and the Hindu traditions; to prove the universal adherence of the artists working in different media, whether architecture, sculpture, painting, music, or dance, to such principles of form. Indeed, these principles are sc pervasive and evident that they are taken for granted as a literary design rather than the basic symbolic foundation which is a continual reminder of the speculative thought which gave rise to them uniformly in all the Indian arts.

These arguments could profitably be extended to the field of music and dance where sound and human movement is once again conceived within the periphery of a circle with spokes, and a still centre. Variations, endless permutations and combinations, are possible and the Indian *tāla* system represents this in a most significant manner, where the *sama* is the still centre, the beats are the spokes, and the different mathematical possibilities are the families of *jātis* etc.

One could elaborate upon this with examples from each of the arts, but here, to make the point clear, attention will be drawn to only a few major examples of Indian art.

First, the architectural plan of the stūpa of Nagarjunikonda. Amongst others, three stūpas are built on the architectural ground plan of a wheel with spokes, eight, four, and sixteen. This ground plan is followed by Indian architectural monuments and is seen up to the time of the Kerala temples of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The square, as the other major motif, is followed in the ground plan of many temples, chief amongst these being the Aihole and the Kailashnath temple of Elura.

In sculpture, many outstanding examples can be quoted, but an analysis of the famous Cola Naṭarāja figure will make it clear that the rhythm of the world is comprehended through the use of the upper and lower limbs in the relationship of a diagonal, where the raised leg can hypothetically represent a radius which can encompass the entire space of the circle. This is held together by the centre or the navel, and the whole figure becomes the symbol of cyclic time and the circular movements of the universe. Different permutations and combinations within the periphery of a circle, as inverted triangles, become the guiding principle of a style like Bhārat Nāṭyam in Indian dance, or of intertwined serpents, the *nāgabandha*, in Manipuri, which has the figure of eight as a central motif. Many more examples could be added. In abstract design, the motifs are seen on several ceiling designs as the circle with spokes of fish with a centre in Badami, the concentric circles of a *Nāga* figure in the same site and continuous lines of eternity which adorn ceilings, pillar reliefs and the rest in practically every temple or monument.

Thus what appear to be mere formal elements in all the Indian arts are, indeed, intimately related to the abstraction of Upaniṣadic thought which is assiduously translated into the well-designed concrete language of the artistic media.

The above can at best be considered a rough suggestive outline of a line of enquiry into the nature of Indian art, where the interconnectedness of levels and genres of abstraction and concretization are fundamental and basic. All this, along with the details of the ritual methodology contained in the Śrautasūtras and Brāhmaṇas, could perhaps modify the view that Indian aethetics or artistic creation and speculative thought are exclusive categories : indeed it may lead to the view that in some areas the two are mutually interdependent.

It is hoped that this basis of enquiry will be further explored through an interdisciplinary research project which would investigate the different elements of these arts from the standpoint of the world view they embody, and the methodologies they adopt to translate it into a system of form through diverse media.

PURUṢA AND THE ORIGIN OF FORM

BETTINA BÄUMER

In the Indian tradition since the Puruṣa-Sūkta every form of creation or realization—natural, spiritual, social, artistic etc.—is somehow related to or derived from that archetypal being, the original Man, called the Puruṣa. This fact is also related to the central role of sacrifice in all spheres of creation, the Puruṣa being identified with the sacrifice, both in his dismemberment which "makes" the elements of the world, and in his "reconstruction." Paul Mus, in his excellent article "Oū finit Puruṣa ?"[1] rightly asks where is the limit of this apparently all-embracing symbol. He focuses his study on the interpretation of Ṛg Veda X, 90, verses 1 and 12, i.e. on the relation of the four castes with the original Puruṣa, and on the link between the Puruṣa who "surpasses the earth by ten fingers breadth" (v. 1) and the Buddha, whose head is topped by the *uṣṇīṣa* or protuberance. Without entering into these much discussed topics, what interests us here is the relation of the Puruṣa as the immanent principle of everything, with the origin of form, the creation of art.

It is also a generally accepted idea, propounded by the Nāṭya Śāstra and other texts, that art is a sacrifice—in the sense that it participates in the creative cosmic sacrifice. The much later "pious" interpretation says that the *puṇya* or merit, the spiritual-benefit of a work of art corresponds to the merit acquired by the performance of a Vedic sacrifice. But this is only a superficial aspect of the relation. There is a much deeper meaning in the fact that again and again the various actions relating to the creation of sacred art are identified with actions of the sacrifice,the artist is called a priest, and so forth. The reason is that according to Indian cosmology the world would be chaos without the ordering power of the sacrifice (in Vedic terms : *ṛta*). Now all art has to do with an ordering of on unordered material, whether the human emotions (in drama), a block of stone (in sculpture or architecture) or whatever. The *action* of ordering is precisely the sacrifice (or, in a more general sense we could say : ritual), but the *principle* of order is the Puruṣa, who is both the incarnation of sacrifice, the victim and the agent, as far as the Veda is concerned, and the inner principle of spiritual order in the Upaniṣads. Another factor which made the Puruṣa the ideal "model"[2] for any artistic creation is that he has a body with organically related limbs. This should not be interpreted in

---

1. *Mélanges d 'Indianisme ā la mémoire de Louis Renou,* Paris (Institut de Civilisation Indienne), 1968, pp. 539-563.
2. *Pratirūpa*, in the sense of Ṛg Veda VI, 47, 18. Cf. P. Mus, art. cit., p. 548 : "le modèle suprême, l' archetype de l' apparence humaine."

the sense of the European renaissance, as if man were "the measure of all things"[3], but precisely the cosmic and divine "body" is the measure of all other "organisms", whether social (the castes as parts of his body) or artistic, as we shall see.

Having a body, the Puruṣa has measure and proportion, and as Paul Mus rightly observes, this measure is above all related to the vertical dimension.[4]

Any creation of art is giving form to the formless, and in a way manifesting the unmanifest. The artist, in order to create form, has to dive deep into himself, he has to meditate, and the result of his meditation is *dhyānarūpa,* the "meditation-form". In the line of the Upaniṣadic tradition the process is the following : Starting from the unmanifest *(avyakta),* i. e. Brahman, the first inner manifestation is the Puruṣa, the mediator par excellence between the two poles of the Invisible and the visible, between *nirguṇa* and *saguṇa.*[5] This process is clearly, though very succinctly, expressed in the Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad : First the *nirguṇa brahman* is meditated upon, as the formless light in the space of the heart, and this is an "empty" contemplation *(bhāvanā śūnyā),* because there is no object. When this realization *(pratīta,* Sūtra IV 1) dawns, there arises a form in the same space of the heart, which is not a describable form, but which can only be expressed symbolically. Hence the Sūtra says in its conciseness : *pratītāt pratīkaḥ* (IV 1), "from the realization comes the symbol". And the commentary gives the most pertinent example for such a symbolic intuition : "As the nature *(bhāva)* of the Puruṣa is conceived of the size of a thumb, and in imagination the thumb means only light, so it is like the post of the Yūpa". This is not a random example, it is the most original appearance of form, first in the heart of the meditator as the *aṅguṣṭamātra puruṣa.* Form is immediately related to "measure" *(mātra),* though not in an external sense. And the interior symbol of the Puruṣa which, according to the note of the Ṭippaṇi, means light, the flame, is also directly related to sacrifice in the form of the Yūpa. What does this mean ? Here again Paul Mus can give us the key to the symbolic interrelation : "It is one of the natural bases of brahmanical speculation to affirm the so to say congenial verticality of the blazing fire, of the growing tree and of the man in action : three interchangeable images of the cosmic pillar which props up the heaven above the earth. The Vedic tradition, since its indo-european origins, is thus centered in the sacred fire which is itself the sacrifice—as later it will be the Puruṣa—and of which it is repeatedly said that it rises in its glory vertically, above the 'prostrated' waters. Agni is also compared with a tree from which all beings have issued forth as its branches. Skambha, the 'cosmic Support' of the Atharva Veda, it going to borrow from it its principal characteristics, though it is modelled, as L. Renou has rightly shown, on the Puruṣa of RV X, 90. This vertical stature becomes really axial in the general image which one has of the world, where the heavenly vault is conceived as turning around a 'pole', in other words an axle, in relation to which we are placed in an oblique sense, and where the whole takes the aspect of a world mountain, Meru, which carries us on its slopes and culminates in the North. The Fire, the Support, the Tree, the body of the Giant are all images related to the appropriate myths which are going to express in a sense very objectively this great fact of experience, which has been incorporated in architecture, where each altar or each temple becomes the universe, around its own vertical axis".[6]

---

[3] Cf. Alice Boner, Introduction to *Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad,* Delhi (Motilal Banarsidass), 1982 : "Man here grows out of the elemental structure of the cosmos and is connatural with it. He is not the measure of all things, the "*Homo universalis*" as he is commonly assumed to be in the classical traditions of the West. The cosmos is not seen in the image of man, but man is seen in the image of the cosmos."

[4] Art. cit., p. 560. Cf. also Alice Boner, *Principles of Composition in Hindu Sculpture,* Leiden (Brill), 1962, p. 22.

[5] Cf. *Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad,* Prapāṭhaka IV, introduction.

The next step after the inner realization of the archetype or symbol (*rūpa* in this text very often has these meanings) is the image. A note of the Ṭippaṇī on the Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad which actually should belong to the above quoted Sūtra, goes one step further in explaining this sequence:[7] "*Pratīta* (realization or intuition), *pratīka*

> (symbol), *pratimā* (image), in this order these three are essential. When in the reflection of an aureole of light Brahman is realized, that is realization (*pratīta*), like the Puruṣa consisting of consciousness, who is not seen by the eye, by whom the eye sees. That which manifests the experiences in the manner of the relationship between the resemblence and the thing to be known, that is the symbol (*pratīka*), as for example 'the Puruṣa of the size of a thumb' and others. That which in worship bestows bliss, that is the image (*pratimā*)".

The Upaniṣadic love for puns by means of which often important relationships are expressed, is here found in the play on the prefix *prati*, "towards, against" : *pratīta* (or *pratīti*), from the root *i-*, to go, the meaning of which occurs with many words

---

6. Art. cit., pp. 560-561 (my translation). Cf. also the interesting series of articles by John Irwin, " 'Aśokan' Pillars : a reassessment of the evidence", Parts I to IV, *The Burlington Magazine*, Vols. CXV (1973), CXVI (1974), CXVII (1975), CXVIII (1976).
7. Ṭippaṇī on VI 19 : *pratīta-pratīka-pratimā-krameṇa trīṇi mukhyāni. jyotirmaṇḍalānubhāse brahma upalabhyate tat pratītam. yathā vijñānamayā-puruṣaḥ yaścakṣuṣā na paśyati yena cakṣūṃṣi paśyatīti. yad-upamoprameyakrameṇa anubhavabhavān pradarśayati tat pratīkam. aṅguṣṭamātraḥ puruṣa ityādivākyena. yā saparyāyāṃ ānandaṃ pradadāti sā pratimeti. avyakta-vyakta-prakaaṭ-krameṇa nirguṇa-sūkṣma-sthūla bhāvena janānaṃ daivabhāvāharaṇaṃ kurvantī sā devayajanavidyā.*

connoting understanding (*gam-*, *adhigam-* etc.), means first the approach (going towards) and later the full understanding or realization; *pratika*, the "being turned towards", hence the face and the appearance, so to say the visible portion of something which becomes its symbol (as in a way the face is the symbol of a man); and *pratimā*, from the root *mā-*, to measure, to create : the "counter-measure" or "counter-creation", which is the concrete image. *Prati* implies a certain receptivity, since it is a receiving, a corresponding insight and creation. *Pratimā* is of course closely related to *pratirūpa* (*pratibimba*, reflection, etc.).

Returning to Sūtra 2 of Prapāṭhaka IV of the Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad, the third step is expressed in the following way :

> Sūtra: "From the form (of the symbol) arise the limbs (of images).
>
> Commentary: "The images corresponding to every (original) form arise on the basis of that nature (*bhāva*), as in the case of the Puruṣa".[8]

The construction both in the Sūtra and in the Commentary is entirely passive—the subject of the artist does not assert itself, he is only a medium through whom the archetype (*rūpa*) or symbol (*pratīka*) perceived within takes shape and assumes a "corresponding form" (*pratirūpa*).

The assuming form of the formless or unmanifest is expressed in a number of steps, starting from the two: *avyakta* and *vyakta* (or *amūrta* and *mūrta*, etc.).[9] But even in this pair really a threefold development is implied, since both *avyakta* and *vyakta* are called *rūpa*[10], and hence they derive from a source which transcends even the subtle form, Brahman. Any kind of conception or visualization of Brahman belongs already to the *avyakta rūpa*. In this context we may quote a passage from the Nigama Diṇḍima Ṭippaṇī on the Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad :[11]

> "Form is twofold : manifest and unmanifest. When there is a specified meditation, this is the unmanifest form (*avyakta-rūpa*); as by the meditation on Brahman arises the realization that Brahman is all-pervasive. The all-pervasiveness of Brahman is the essential form of Brahman (*tattvarūpa*). Due to this

---

[8] Sūtra 2 : *rūpādaṅgāni sañjāyante*. Comm. : *tadbhāvād-rūpaṃ rūpaṃ pratirūpaṃ jāyate yathā puruṣe*. ...

[9] Cf. Bṛhadāraṅyaka Up. II, 3; Maitrī Up. VI, 3; etc. Cf. also Maryla Falk, *Nāma-rūpa and Dharma-rūpa*, Calcutta (University of Calcutta), 1943, pp. 42 ff. and *passim*.

[10] Cf. Śilparatnakoṣa (unpublished manuscript, p. 31), which is even more explicit, since here the *mūrti* is said to be twofold, *avyaktā* (related to meditation) and *vyaktā* (related to external worship). *mūrtiścadvividhā proktā vyaktāvyaktaiva ca, avyaktā bhāvadhārāyāṃ vyaktā pūjana-karmaṇi*.

[11] Unpublished, Devanāgarī transcript, p. 10.

realization, i. e. due to its vision, the heart becomes firm. What is the purpose of repetition ? The sādhakas obtain the form of divine light by meditating on the light. This is the light-form of Brahman in the opinion of the yogis. In the meditation on sound the yogis hear the internal sound; this is the sound-form of Brahman (*nāda-rūpa*).

By contemplating on the three (main) lines [of the compositional diagram] the sentiment of the image is to be determined. But when this meditation becomes manifest, it assumes form, this is the form embodying the feeling (*bhāvarūpa*). By seeing it the feeling arises in the heart. *This is the Puruṣa in the contemplation of Brahman, it is the Yūpa in the material manifest form.* The meditation on its light in the manner of a flame, i. e. the manifest form of Agni. In the meditation on sound this is *nāda* (which is) OM...In the same way is also the conception of Brahman as Puruṣa which, being unmanifest [as Brahman] becomes manifest [as Puruṣa]. In the material conception the meditation on the Puruṣa in the flame of light is (like) a goddess full of brightness; this is the sense. In the same way from OM the letters of the alphabet become manifest, as it is said in the Praṇavatāraka Upaniṣad : 'From the Puruṣa originates the form of Nārāyaṇa. From the light arises the nature of the fiery Ambā. From OM arises the form of letters consisting of five morae : *a, u, m, nāda* and *bindu*.' These manifest forms bestow ever new feelings. For this purpose the image has been created. These very forms give rise to forms over forms and corresponding forms, as it is said in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa (IX, 2, 1, 12) : 'Food is verily form'. Food is (the essence) of all the limbs of the body, it is the character of the image. ..."[12]

In this text which is in continuity with the Vedic symbolism of Puruṣa and Yūpa, "form" means not only visible form but also audible sound.[13] To the light-form of Brahman corresponds the *nādarūpa,* the sound-form, both belonging to the intermediate state between transcendence and concrete manifestation. It is not necessary to develop here the Tantric and Yogic implications which are hinted at in this text.

Without quoting the well-known Upaniṣadic texts on the subject[14], I want to draw attention to one less known, but not less ancient, text which is still embedded in a cosmic vision of the Puruṣa.

---

[12] The Tantric ideas of this text are clear, since the manifestation is related to the Devī, the feminine Energy of the Word (*Śakti*). The "descending" manifestation becomes even more concrete in the identification of *rūda* with *anna*

[13] *Nāma-rūpa* as the twofold manifestation, cf. Maryla Falk, op. cit., p. 51 : "The complete actualization of brahman as universal knowledge, universal consciousness is again coalescent with the realization of universal Form : the one nāma coincides with the one rūpa."

[14] Cf. the article by Kapila Vatsyayan in this volume which emphasizes other aspects of the same fundamental theme. Cf. also Maryla Falk, op. cit.

The Jaiminiya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa I, 27 speaks in a series of correspondences typical of brāhmaṇa-upaniṣadic thinking of three forms of the Puruṣa[15] : the one in the eye who is simply called *puruṣa*, "Man"; the one in the sun who is called *atipuruṣa*, "Superman"; and the one in lightning who is called *paramapuruṣa*, "Supreme Person". From these "all forms originate", but in different ways in which they have to be meditated upon or correlated mentally (*upāsīta*) : The Puruṣa in the eye is called *anurūpa*, "conform", following the (original) form, corresponding to it; and all the forms are following it. The Puruṣa in the sun is called *pratirūpa* which is an ambiguous word, since it can mean the image, the form reflecting an original form, or else the model te be imitated. In the first case there would be a still more original form than the Puruṣa in the sun. The Puruṣa in lightning[16], who is clearly the divine counterpart of the human (*adhyātmam*) and cosmic (*adhibhūtam*) Puruṣas, is the "universal form" or all-form (*sarvarūpa*), and he who meditates on him finds all forms in himself (*sarvāṇi hāsmin rūpāṇi bhavanti*, 6), i. e. the one who approaches the source of all forms has himself access to all forms.

Without entering into a more detailed and contextual interpretation of this passage, what is important for us is the identification of the three Puruṣas with three types of form : the divine "womb of all forms", the cosmic image or reflection of the divine archetype, and the human form as an "imitation" (*anu*), an "obedient" follower of the divine Puruṣa (*anu* has a more humble connotation than *prati*), and yet they are only three "aspects" of the one Puruṣa, the origin of form.

Venturing a free interpretation we could say the following : Man is not the creator of form, he "receives" it and "imitates" the cosmic and divine forms.[17] The cosmos is also not the origin of form since it is itself created, hence it is a "reflection", *pratirūpa*, *pratibimba* or *ābhāsa*, depending on the philosophical interpretations. But the cosmos is *atipuruṣa* (or we may say that it reflects the *atipuruṣa*), the "cosmic giant". Only the divine, the *paramapuruṣa*, is the origin of all forms, hence *sarvarūpa*.[18]

---

[15] Since I am only paraphrasing the text, let me give the Sanskrit : *sa haiṣo 'm tena parivṛḍho mṛtyum-adhyāste 'nnaṃ kṛtvā. athaiṣa eva puruṣo yo 'yaṃ cakṣuṣi, ya āditye so' tipuruṣaḥ, yo vidyuti sa paramapuruṣaḥ. ete ha vāva trayaḥ puruṣāḥ, ā hā 'syaite jāyantc. sa yo' yaṃ cakṣuṣyeṣo 'nurūpo nāma, anvaṅ hyeṣa sarvāṇi rūpāṇi, tam-anurūpc ityupāsīta, anvañci hainaṃ sarvāṇi rūpāṇi bhavanti. ya āditye sa pratirūpaḥ, pratyaṅ hycṣa sarvāṇi rūpāṇi, taṃ pratirūpa ityupāsīta. pratyañci hainaṃ sarvāṇi rūpāṇi bhavanti, yo vidyuti sa sarvarūpaḥ, sarvāṇi hyetasmin rūpāṇi, taṃ sarvarūpa ityupāsīta, sarvāṇi hāsmin rūpāṇi bhavanti. ete vāva trayaḥ puruṣāḥ, ā hā' syaite jāycnte etadevam vedātho yasyaivaṃ vidvānudgāyati.*

[16] Cf. Maryla Falk, op. cit., p. 10 ff. on the relation between the image of lightning and enlightenment.

[17] "Imitation" in the sense of *anukṛti* as it occurs in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa VI, 27. Cf. A.K. Coomaraswamy, *The Transformation of Nature in Art*, Cambridge (Harvard University Press), 1935, pp. 4 ff. The passage from the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa has also been commented upon by N. Ray, *An Approach to Indian Art*, Chandigarh (Panjab University), 1974, pp. 63 ff.

This may be the ultimate theoretical background why Indian art is neither anthropomorphic (or anthropocentric) nor naturalistic (or cosmocentric), but aims at con-forming (*anurūpa*) to the divine archetype (the original Puruṣa) which is itself reflected in man and in the cosmos.

It is then not surprising that in various art-forms it is the Puruṣa who appears as the mediator and the principle of form.[19] In architecture the Vāstupuruṣa is derived from the Vāstubrahman, and it serves as "an image of ordered manifestation. Vāstu now is its name. Its image is that of the Puruṣa, the place of reference in which man beholds the identity of macrocosm and microcosm. On its appeased being and form spread on the ground he sets up the temple, the monument of his own transformation. ··· This body once more, in the concrete form (mūrti), made by art, is that of the Puruṣa, arisen."[20]

In music the *prabandhapuruṣa* is the concrete expression of the *nādabrahman*, the conception of the composition divided in parts[21], the six *aṅgas* which in Āyurveda constitute the complete body.

In poetry we have the conception of the *kāvyapuruṣa*[22] which is again a manifestation of the *Śabdabrahman*. The *kāvyapuruṣa* is much more than a "fictitious name in order to 'masculinize' the neuter *kāvya*."[23] The description given by Rājaśekhara is revealing : He is the son of Sarasvatī, born of her *tapas*, which reminds us of the Ṛgvedic Virāj (=*vāk*) from whom the Puruṣa is born.[24] Then he is des-

---

18. Trying to distinguish it from the *viśvarūpa* of the Bhagavad Gītā one could stress the difference between *sarva*, the all-embracing, unifying totality, and *viśva*, the multifarious, differentiated universe (what differs is only the aspect).
19. I owe thanks to Professor (Miss) Prem Lata Sharma for important suggestions which she has given me while discussing this topic.
20. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Calcutta (University of Calcutta), 1946, Vol. I, p. 84.
21. Cf. Śārṅgadeva, *Saṅgītaratnākara*, IV, 13 (I owe the reference to Prof. P. L. Sharma).
22. Cf. Rājaśekhara, *Kāvyamīmāṃsā*, chapter III (*kāvyapuruṣotpatti*).
23. *La Kāvyamīmāṃsā de Rājaśekhara*, tr. par N. Stchoupak et L. Renou, Paris (Imprimerie Nationale), 1946, p. 40, note 2.
24. Cf. Ṛg Veda X, 90, 5.

cribed in all his members and organs as consisting of all the parts of poetry, the languages (e. g. Sanskrit is his face), his soul being *rasa,* the poetic feeling. It is quite clear that Puruṣa is here again the principle of creation and the organic unity of all the parts constituting poetry, embracing body and soul before their split.[25]

Thus there is a perfect continuity from the cosmogonic role of the Puruṣa in the Veda upto the later theories in the Śāstras of the different arts, such as sculpture, architecture, music and poetry. The Puruṣa is not only a principle of organic wholeness, or a kind of anthropomorphic symbol, he is the mediator par excellence between the spiritual and the material, in both ways.

---

[25] Cf. the *dhvani* controversy in poetics and the dichotomy between *ātmā* and *śarīra* of poetry.

THE ANTELOPE*

STELLA KRAMRISCH

In the myth of Śiva, the goat as sacrificial as well as demonic and lecherous animal was associated with Dakṣa. Its significance is less pervasive than that of the antelope.

From Vedic time the antelope, a denizen of untamed nature, was the animal figure of Prajāpati in the spontaneity of his intercourse with his daughter. Rudra shot Prajāpati the antelope. Prajāpati—in a way even in this myth—sacrificed himself into creation, spent himself while creating. In the myth of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (Ch. IX. 3), Prajāpati, exhausted from creation, collapsed and fell apart (*ŚB.* 6.1.2.12). Conceptualized as the year, Prajāpati of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* spent himself into creation (*ŚB.* 6.1.2.18). He filled with his content the year, the unit of cyclical time. He was built up by the gods in the shape of the Vedic altar (*ŚB.* 6.1.2.13-22). The human sacrificer imitated their example and by complex architectural rites built up the sacrifice in the shape of the altar. Prajāpati was the sacrifice and the year (*ŚB.* 11 1. 1.1); and Prajāpati was the altar (*ŚB.* 10.1.3.5). In the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas,* however, the sacrifice threatened with destruction by Rudra/Virabhadra fled to the sky in the shape of an antelope (*VmP.* 5.26-27; *MBh.* 12.274.34-35). It took its flight in the same figure in which Prajāpati had been shot at by Rudra.

Vedic Prajāpati, the antelope, frightened to death by Rudra, the wild hunter, made him Paśupati, Lord of Animals, for sparing Prajāpati's life. In Dakṣa's sacrifice as told in the *Mahābhārata,* however, the antelope, the 'personified' sacrifice, was struck by Rudra's arrow right in the heart (*MBh.* 10.18.13; cf. *LP.* 1.100.34-35; cf. *ŚP.* 2.2.37.45-46), and leapt up and fled to heaven, pursued forever by the hunter of the antelope. Mṛgavyādha, the hunter of the antelope, up in the sky is the star name of Rudra, the Lord of Animals, Paśupati.

Prajāpati Dakṣa, patriarch and sacrificer, his own head having been thrown into the sacrificial fire as a last offering, was given the head of a goat when his sacrifice was restored and completed by Śiva. When represented in art, the identity of Dakṣa is immediately recognizable by his having the head of a goat, though Agni on one occasion assumed the face of a goat to amuse his child Kārttikeya (*MBh.* 3.215.23). This was in character for the myth in which Agni lusted after the *kṛttikās,* the wives of the ṛṣis, who became the 'mothers' of Kārttikeya.

---

* from *The Presence of Śiva* (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1981).

The goat was the last and least of the five animals offered in Vedic sacrifices (cf. *ŚB*. 10.2.1.1). The sacrificer redeemed himself by the animal that he offered (*ŚB*. 11.7.1.3). Most anciently, the five kinds of sacrificial victims were man, horse, bull, ram, and goat (*ŚB*. 10.2.1.1). Subsequently the goat alone remained the sacrificial animal (*ŚB*. 6.2.1. 5, 39; 6.2.2.1-6) that functioned as a proxy for the human sacrificer, for his animal nature that he sacrificed. By sacrificing it he consecrated himself.

The black antelope skin on the other hand symbolized the sacrifice itself (*ŚB*. 6.4.1.6; 12.8.3.3; 14.1.2.2). The *brahmacārin* was clothed in a black antelope skin (*AV*. 11.5.6). The rite of consecration was performed on a black antelope skin (*ŚB*. 1.1.4.3; 3.2.1.1). During the year of initiation, the sacrificer wore a circular gold plate suspended on a triple cord of hemp from his neck down to his navel. The golden disc had twenty-one knobs comprising symbolically the totality of space and time. This golden disc was the sun, the twenty-one knobs its rays. Wearing the golden disc, man was transfigured from his human existence into his divine essence, for only then was he able to bear the fire of the sun, its seminal vital energy (*ŚB*. 6. 7. 1. 1-8). The golden disc was "sown up in a black antelope's skin; for the black antelope skin is the sacrifice" (*ŚB*. 6. 7. 1. 6). Between the body of the sacrificer and the solar energy of the golden disc lay the antelope skin as the means of protection and transfiguration.

The sacrificer was anointed on the black antelope skin (*ŚB*. 9. 3. 4. 10). Antelope and goat, in their symbolic significance, are clearly differentiated. Rudra's upper garment was a black antelope skin (*BP*. 1. 2. 27. 99). At a sacrifice when Brahmā invested Rudra with the sword that he had created for him, Rudra showed himself wearing a black antelope skin studded with stars of gold (*MBh*. 12. 160. 44-47). He wore it as Mṛgavyādha/Sirius, the Hunter of the Antelope.

"On a he-goat's skin should be anointed one desirous of prosperity, on a black antelope skin one desirous of spiritual lustre" (*ŚB*. 9. 3. 4. 14). The goat skin was magically instrumental in securing worldly goods whereas the black antelope skin was ritually effective in satisfying the longings of the mind and spirit for illumination. Should anyone desire both these fulfillments, he should be anointed on both skins (*ŚB*. 9. 3. 4. 14). The imparting of the Pāśupata vow in Bhogya, the city of Śiva, was not less accommodating.

The consecrating magic of the black antelope skin was vested in the black antelope, Rudra's victim. "Once upon a time the sacrifice escaped the gods, and having become a black antelope roamed about. The gods having thereupon found it and stripped it of its skin" (*ŚB*. 1. 1. 4. 1). The black antelope was homologized with the sacrifice. Where the black antelope roamed about was the land suitable for sacrifice, from the eastern to the western ocean, from Himālaya to Vindhya. What lay beyond it was the land of barbarians (*M.* 2.21-23). Even so it was the skin of the black antelope *(kṛṣṇājina)* that sanctified and was homologized with the *brahman* (*KB.* 4.11). The gods flayed the animal; Rudra had shot it.

Ironically, though, by unerring logic, Rudra who was excluded from the sacrifice was the cause of the sacrificial, sanctifying magic emanating from the flayed skin of the black antelope, his victim.

Ritually, the black antelope was the sacrifice. Mythically and ritually Prajāpati was the sacrifice. 'With the sacrifice the gods sacrificed to the sacrifice' (*RV.* 10.90.16; *VS.* 31.16; *ŚB.* 10.2.2.2). The antelope was Prajāpati and from the beginning Rudra's animal victim.

The antelope became part of the iconography of Śiva. In bronze and stone images of many aspects of Śiva the antelope remains closely associated with the Great Lord. He holds it in his hand; he displays it as an attribute as he displays his other attributes, the battle axe, trident, flame, drum, and skull, as insignia of his being. Playfully, the antelope—small in scale, for it is but an attribute—is shown leaping supported by the fingers of the god's hand raised shoulder high, leaping towards the god or away from him, its head turned towards Śiva or in the opposite direction. The antelope is part of the image of Śiva in his manifestation as Candraśekhara, the lord crowned with the crescent moon. In this aspect the figure of Śiva stands straight like the cosmic pillar, like the *liṅga,* and this aspect is further emphasized in the image of Śiva Ekapāda or 'One Foot', whose body is supported by a coalesced leg terminating in one foot. The antelope is similarly balanced on the hand of Śiva in a flexed stance as Tripurāntaka, the destroyer of the triple city of the demons, or it is shown on his hand as Viṣāpaharaṇa, Śiva having swallowed the world poison; on his hand as Vīṇādhara-Dakṣiṇāmūrti, the lord as the origin of music and all the arts, or on the hand of Śiva Vṛṣabhavāhana leaning on his conveyance, the bull. The antelope is on Śiva's hand when he is represented together with the Goddess, his bride, as Kalyāṇa Sundara, when he stands arm in arm with the Great Goddess as Umāsahita, or enthroned with her as Somāskanda with the child Skanda-Kārttikeya between them. Even the Great Goddess, shown by herself as Maheśvarī, upholds the cognisance of the antelope as does the Great God himself. In the image of Paśupati, however, though it is similar to that of Candraśekhara, the figure of the antelope is substituted by a *kapāla*, the skull of Brahmā (*ŚRa.* 2.22.114-116), demonstrating the parallel meaning of the hunter Rudra and the antelope/Prajāpati on the one hand and that of Bhairava and Brahmā on the other. In contrast to this wealth of images, the standardized iconography of the image of Paśupati, but for its name, does not exhibit any feature that would visibly make it an image of the Lord of Animals.

From the Vedic myth of Paśupati to its epic and Purāṇic transpositions, the latter supported by a living faith, the Pāśupata religion, and by innumerable images of Śiva in many aspects, the antelope accompanies Śiva. Prajāpati, the antelope of the *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā* (4.2.12) and the antelope, the embodied sacrifice, each Śiva's victim, are upheld playfully by one of Śiva's hands. The animal was integrated into the iconography and composition of the figure of Śiva itself; it was drawn into and became part of diverse manifestations of the Great God with the inscrutable smile.

Held in the upper left of Śiva's four hands and shown by iconographic convention balanced on or leaping from two fingers, the antelope was incorporated into the ambience of Śiva, as were his other attributes, the weapons, the musical instruments, other objects, and the skull of Brahmā. The latter, related mythically to the Prajāpati-antelope, was confined to images of Śiva Paśupati and Bhairava, whereas the antelope graced many aspects of Śiva that did not directly refer to Śiva as the hunter of the antelope.

Instead of being carried by the hand of Śiva, the antelope is shown in much larger size by the side of Śiva as Bhikṣāṭana, the Supreme Beggar, and also as Kaṅkālamūrti, the 'skeleton-(bearing) image', the latter carrying not only the skull of Brahmā but also the corpse of Viṣvaksena. Standing beside the god and raising itself on its hind legs is an antelope, its head looking towards Śiva's pendant hand apparently holding out to the antelope some leaves. The god holding out his hand to the animal accentuates the meaning of this iconographical conception. To the left of Bhikṣāṭana, balancing the figure of the antelope on his right, a *gaṇa* carries on his head a large bowl, a receptacle for all the offerings presented to the Supreme Beggar and which he keeps in store for his devotees. In his grace the Lord holds out his hand to the antelope.

The antelope, the animal symbol of Prajāpati, the Lord of Generation, the Creator, implies also the creature, the animal or *paśu*, the human soul (*jīva*). The sage Jābālin, when asked to explain who the *paśus* were, answered, "The Jīvas are said to be the Paśus. Paśupati is so called because of his being the controller of the Paśus" (*JUP*. 12-13). In the work of the artists, the sculptors and painters, the figure of the antelope looks up to the image of Bhikṣāṭana holding out his hand to the animal. In all the other images, the figure of the *paśu*, the animal, the human soul, is in Śiva's hand.

Abbreviations :

AV.	*Atharva Veda*
BP.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*

JUp.	*Jaiminīya Upaniṣad*
KB.	*Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇa*
LP.	*Liṅga Purāṇa*
M.	*Mānava Dharmaśāstra*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*
RV.	*Ṛg Veda*
ŚB.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
ŚP.	*Śiva Purāṇa*
SRa.	*Śilparatna*
VS	*Vājasaneyi Saṁhitā*
VmP.	*Vāmana Purāṇa*

A RARE VIŚVARŪPA

C. SIVARAMAMURTI

A sculpture in the National Museum at Kathmandu in Nepal is very interesting, for it poses a problem regarding its identification. This unique sculpture is interesting from every point of view, iconographic as well as its rarity as a motif. It is, indeed, thought-provoking, and requires careful attention and study.

We know that in Indian iconography, there has been the mind of the sculptor at play, creating innumerable suggestive interpretations in different forms, constantly changing from time to time, and even sometimes simultaneously, to represent the same theme. We may take, for instance, the Kuṇinda coin of Amoghabhūti of the first-second century A. D., wherein Lakshmī is prominently given as a standing figure of a goddess carrying the lotus in her hand. There is a cow with the *śrīvatsa* symbol between the horns and there is also the wish-fulfilling tree, *kalpavṛkṣa*. This is very significant because it gives Lakshmī in four forms, anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, symbolic, and in a botanic representation of the same theme. Vishnu is not only Purushottama but Śrīnivāsa, the abode of Śrī with the epithet *śrīvatsavakṣāḥ*. *Kaustubha* itself is a rare gem, another form of Prosperity, Śrī herself personified as *Ratna*. That is why in the Pāla sculpture of Bengal of the medieval period the marks of *śrīvatsa* and *kaustubha* are practically combined, and they are not represented separately. The cow is not only the abode of all the deities but is also mainly the zoomorphic representation of Śrī herself. In the *Mahābhārata* there is an elaborate description of how the various gods are included in the body of the cow, and Śrī prominently. In this, again, the position of *śrīvatsa* between the horns is especially interesting as the horn is suggestive of the gateway to prosperity, or Śrī, which Kālidāsa gives in the line *śṛngāntaraṃ dvāram ivārthasiddheḥ*, *Raghuvaṃśa* 2. On the coins of India, Lakshmī is always given prominently on the reverse in one form or another. Sometimes she is shown as the goddess of royal fortune; sometimes as the goddess of the nine treasures with the principal ones, *śaṅkha* and *padma*, flanking her; sometimes as the *kalpavṛkṣa*, the wishfulfilling tree which is the source of all prosperity, with the *nidhis* or treasures at its roots; and sometimes as the cow herself. The sixth-century coin of Aṃśuvarman from Nepal has not only the cow but also the legend *kāmadehi*, the yielder of all desires.

The greatest concept of *Purusha* as given in the *Ṛgveda* in the hymn of creation, which has been specially referred to by Udayana in his *Kusumāñjali*, where he classifies the Vedas according to their themes. Udayana analyses the forms of Paramātmā as the Creator, *sraṣṭā*; as the abode of Excellence i. e. all embracing *vibhūti;* as the universal sound unit, *śabdabrahma*; as beyond the universe. *niṣprapañca*; as the Lord of sacrifice, *yajñapuruṣa*; as the assumer of form, *dehāvirbhāva*; and as the object of adoration, *upāsya*. Udayana feels that there is no part of the *śruti* or the Veda which does not sing the glory of the Lord in some form or other, using one of the themes classified above :

> *na santyeva hi vedabhāgā yatra parameśvaro na gīyate* :
> *tathā hi sraṣṭṛtvena puruṣasūkteṣu, vibhūtyā rudreṣu,*
> *śabdabrahmatve na maṇḍalabrāhmaneṣu, prapañcam*
> *purasktyṛa niṣprapañcatayo' paniṣatsu, yajñapuruṣatvena*
> *mantravidhiṣu, dehāvirbhāvairupākhyāneṣu, upāsyatvena*
> *ca sarvatreti, Nyāyakusumāñjali* 5. 16.

This is such an important section of the Veda that it is this that is elaborated in the *Bhagavad Gītā* where Krishna calls Arjuna to behold wonders that he had never witnessed before, and the sight of which was specially vouchsafed him by enabling him to see them. It was impossible to rely on the ordinary mortal eye for they could be seen only with the divine eye, specially provided by Krishna for the purpose.

> "Behold the Ādityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the Aśvins, and also the Maruts; behold many marvels never seen before, O Bharata.
> Now behold here in my body O Guḍākeśa, the whole world established in one—including the moving and the unmoving—and whatever else thou desirest to see." Bhagavad Gītā 11, 6-7.

Then he catalogues all the deities in the manifold pantheonic form embodied in himself, the omniform, and that dazzles the eyes of Arjuna.

It is this that has inspired the *Viśvarūpa* sculptures all over the land, particularly the early ones of the Mathura school. The fragmentary sculpture of Vishnu, the *Viśvarūpa* of early Gupta date in the Mathurā museum is indeed most important. There is the famous one of the Gurjara Pratihara period, of Kanauj, showing all the deities composing the thousand-faced, thousand-eyed, thousand-armed universe-embracing, omniform of Vishnu. This *Viśvarūpa* was earlier wonderfully depicted in the Maitraka sculpture of Gujarat, of which there are several good examples. One of the finest, unfortunately mutilated, but a very early one, following the tradition of Gujarat of representing the image seated, is now in the National Museum. It shows the *avatāras* of Vishnu, the principal faces, leonine and porcine, on either side of the main benign face of Vishnu, Kapila's face of fury on the back, which is rarely seen, and the others arranged above, including those of the tortoise and the fish, and subsequent incarnations, the eleven Rudras, the twelve Ādityas, the eight Vasus, the eight Bhairavas, Gaṇeśa, Kārtikeya, Brahmā, Indra, Vāyu, Agni, every conceivable deity, arranged in such a manner that it presents a veritable universe in miniature in sculpture.

This representation has been most effectively achieved, probably in Nepal rather than elsewhere, though the sculpture may be slightly later. Nevertheless, aesthetically and iconographically, it is a magnificent one. It shows the recumbant form of Sankarshana and the standing form of Vāsudeva suggestively, though there is no specific differentiation of the two forms as such to represent the one or the other. The *gadā* of the recumbant one is a *hala*, and the *musala* is also there. Śesha himself is magnificent. The Nāgas supporting the universe, the earth itself, from below are, again, helping Bhū or Bhūtadhātrī, the earth herself, for she supports the entire concourse of all living beings on herself. Nārāyaṇa himself being *Viśva* and *Vishnu*, is encompassing the whole universe, and Pṛthivī herself stands below the feet, supporting them on her palms, helped no doubt by the Nāga snakes that support the earth and the universe itself. The huge figure of the Purusha answers to the hymn that describes him as 'encompassing the universe'.

The universal form of Vishnu had become such a favourite that in the zoomorphic form of Varāha at Eran all the Devas are shown, each forming one of the millions of bristles of the monumental boar that raised Pṛthivī by its snout, as Pṛthivī is shown in the sculpture itself. This sculpture, as the inscription tells us, was caused to be made in the Gupta period by Dhānyavishnu and his brother. It was this sculpture that was simulated in the medieval period in different places, one of the finest occurring at Khajurāho.

Thus, of these two sculptures, one is a version of Viśvarūpa in anthropomorphic form, and the other is in the zoomorphic form. There is another sculpture which again approaches the glorious Vedic description of creation embodied in different hymns, but in which this is more by suggestion than by the presentation of different deities dispersed all over the body to compose it. This sculpture is this important rare one in the National Museum in Nepal.

It is this composition of the Almighty's creation of the universe from within himself and his enveloping the whole thing by entering it himself, that answers the line of Bhishma, 'from whom all beings of the universe emanate and into whom ultimately all of them move and get absorbed' : *yataḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni bhavantyādiyagāgame yasminśca pralayaṃ yānti punareva yugakṣaye*, *Mahābhārata* 13.

It is well known that water was the very first element that emanated as the aeons started. In other words, creation starts with water. There is a beautiful hymn that describes how water is everything. The Almighty is of the nature of water, *raso vai saḥ*. Water represents life, birth and growth. Manu has said that water was the first of the five elements created : *āpa eva sasarjādau*, *Manusmṛti* 1, 8. This is amply supported by the *Taittirīya Saṃhitā* 4, 1, 8, based on the earlier *Ṛgvedic* version, where, by the power of the almighty bliss, the great causal waters, enwombing the potency of unfolding the universe and creating fire, transformed themselves into the universe and from whom arose the one breath of the gods :

> *āpo ha yan mahatīr viśvamāyaṃ dakṣam dadhānā janayantīr agnim, tato devānām niravartatāsur ekaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*

The importance of water is also stressed in making it the cause of everything in the universe. 'Verily everything is water, all beings are water, life breath is water, all animals are water, all food is water, ambrosia is water, the Almighty in his subtle (*samrāṭ*), monumental (*virāṭ*), and unmanifest (*svarāṭ*) forms is water, the metres are water, the luminaries are water, Vedic texts are water, truth is water, the gods are water, the three worlds, *Bhū*, *Bhuvaḥ* and *Svaḥ*, are water. The source of all these, the Almighty, is denoted by the syllable '*Om*'.

> *āpo vā idaṃ sarvaṃ viśvā bhūtānyāpaṇ prāṇā vā āpaḥ paśava āpo'nnam āpo 'mṛtam āpaḥ samrāḍ āpo virāḍ āpas svarāḍ āpas' chandāṃsyāpo jyotīṃṣyāpas satyam āpas sarvā devatā āpo bhūr bhuvas suvar āpa om,* Nārāyaṇopaniṣad 29.1.

In the *Śatarudrīya* such epithets as *kātyāya ca, nīpyāya ca, sūdyāya ca, sarasyāya ca, nādyāya ca, vaiśantāya ca, kūpyāya ca, varṣyāya ca, avarṣyāya ca, meghyāya ca, tīrthyāya ca, kūlyāya ca, pāryāya ca, prataraṇāya ca, uttaraṇāya ca, phenyāya ca, sikatyāya ca, pravāhyāya ca, hradayyāya ca, niveṣpyāya ca, sūrmyāya ca,* are all very significant in pointing to water, the primal element, as the most important of the manifest forms, *pratyakṣamūrti*, of the Almighty. Śiva himself being symbolic of water, he is eternally bathed in water by devotees and described as delighting in being bathed, *abhiṣekapriyaḥ śivaḥ*.

Rājarāja, the great emperor, in his inscriptions, styled himself as the humble slave of Śiva, with Śiva's feet always on his head, *Śivapādaśekhara*. Rājasiṃha, the seventh century Pallava king, makes himself even more endeared to Śiva by his own head being compared to a lake of water in which Śiva revels. This we find in his famous inscription at Mahābalipuram in a rockcut record in Grantha and Nāgarī characters :

> *abhiṣekajalāpūrṇe citraratnāmbujākare āste viśāli sumukhas śirassarasi śaṅkaraḥ,* Epigraphia Indica, Vol. X, page 12.

There are sculptures from the Kushāna period onwards showing how devotees bathed the Śivaliṅga and decorated it with garlands. A ninth century Gurjara Pratīhāra sculpture of this theme is indeed famous. A number of rishis are shown bathing the Śivaliṅga.

"From him arise all the seas and mountains, from him flow all the rivers in many forms and in all directions. All the herbs and all the essences of life, and the juice sustaining the life that supports the body enshrining the soul are all from Him" :

ataḥ samudrā girayaś ca sarve 'smāt syandante sindhavaḥ
sarvarūpāḥ, ataś ca viśva oṣadhayo rasaś ca yenaiṣa
bhūtas tiṣṭhatyantarātmā, Nārāyaṇopaniṣad 13, 3.

How in the beginning of creation everything arose with water as the base is again illuminatingly given in the *Ṛgveda.*

> "From the shining of the omnilustrous Almighty arose the right and the truth, from that came night and day, and from that, again, the huge mass of oceanic water. From this vast ocean the year was developed and reckoning of time; and the years came into being, with night and day, with beings awake and asleep, indicated by the sun and moon; all the creation itself being after the set pattern as in previous aeons, bringing into being heaven and earth, the atmosphere and bliss of peaceful heaven" :
> *ṛtaṃ ca satyaṃ cābhīddhāttapaso 'dhyajāyata, tato rātrir*
> *ajāyata tataḥ samudro arṇavaḥ, samudrād arṇavād adhi*
> *saṃvatsaro ajāyata, ahorātrāṇi vidadhād viśvasya miṣato*
> *vaśī, sūryācandramasau dhātā yathāpūrvam akalpayat, divaṃ*
> *ca pṛthivīm cāntarikṣam atho suvaḥ.*

The name Hiraṇyagarbha itself is suggestive of the one who issued from the golden egg, 'the Almighty, who could create himself from himself into himself, viewed the waters that create fire and light and uphold the Vedic potency, the one Almighty, the celestial of all the celestials, to whom our offerings are to be made' :

> *yaścidāpo mahimnā paryapaśyad dakṣam dadhānā janayantīr*
> *agnim, yo deveṣvadhi deva eka āsīt*
> *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.*

Again it is the Ṛgvedic picture of the Almighty creating and sustaining the universe through the waters.

This glorious picture of Paramātmā himself having the nature of water, creating water, and the whole universe arising out of water is also embodied in the famous portion of the Veda known as *Mantrapuṣpa* where water is repeatedly stressed as the abode of Agni, Vāyu, Sūrya, Candramā, Nakṣatras, Parjanya, time reckoned in Saṃvatsara, in fact, everything to be reckoned in creation. It is this that has been suggested in this beautiful sculpture in Nepal, for in it is given Paramātmā as the head emerging from the *kalaśa* which is a brimming pitcher suggesting water. We may recall that Lakshmī is Kalaśābdhiputrī, the daughter arising out of the ocean, symbolized by the *pūrṇakumbha*; and the Kushāṇa Lakshmī in the National Museum in Delhi is a famous example of Lakshmī standing on the brimming vessel, suggestive of her birth from the ocean Kalaśābdhi. In the sculpture in Nepal is the embodiment of the entire trinity and the solar deity, the Sūryacatuṣṭaya. Unfortunately, it is mutilated and worn, but still it presents very clearly the *aṣṭa-puṣpikā* or the eight flowers for Śiva as almost a halo around his head, and with the other two, which are nearer the rim of the *kalaśa* and which almost look like ear-rings, are two more, which, taken with the eight, would mean the major *avatāras*, symbolic of Vishnu, and the *kalaśa* itself, the holy vessel is symbolic again of Brahmā.

We may recall here the *kalaśapūjā,* which always precedes in *pūjā.* The *mantra* pronounced to invoke all the Devas in the *kalaśa,* including the holy rivers, says that on the mouth of the *kalaśa* is Vishnu, in the neck Śiva, and in the belly of the vessel Brahmā; centrally situated on the *kalaśa* are the seven mothers, and in the belly itself are the four oceans, along with the earth, composed of the seven continents, the Vedas themselves. All the four, Ṛg, Yajus, Sāma, and Atharva are also there with their *aṅgas (ṣaḍaṅgas,* six limbs, *śikṣā, vyākaraṇa, chandas, nirukta, jyotiṣa* and *kalpa)* Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Godāvarī, Sarasvatī, Narmadā, Sindhu, Kaverī and all the other holy rivers, are also requested to be available, by their presence in the holy water of the vessel, for the purification of the devotees, the objects offered in worship, and the deities themselves. The hymn runs :

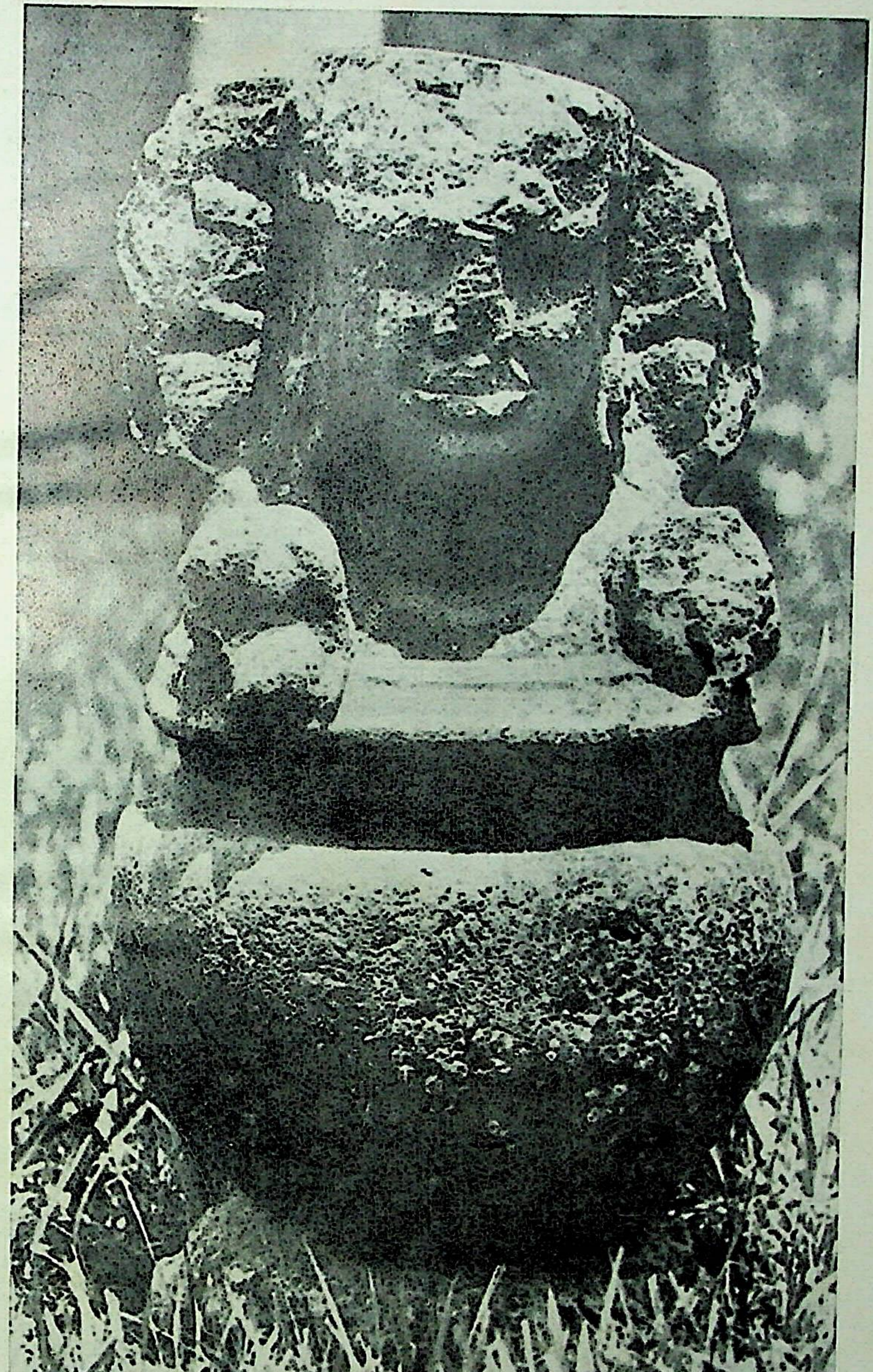
> *kalaśasya mukhe viṣṇuḥ kaṇṭhe rudras samāśritaḥ mūle tatra sthito brahmā madhya mātṛgaṇās smṛtāḥ, kukṣau, tu sāgarā sarve saptadvīpā vasundharāḥ, ṛgvedo 'tha yajurvedas sāmavedo' pyatharvaṇaḥ, aṅgaiś ca sahitās sarve kalaśāmbusamāśritāḥ, gaṅge ca yamune caiva godāvari sarasvati narmade sindhu kaveri jale' smin sannidhiṃ kuru.*

It is this that is represented as the *Viśvarūpa* form in the sculpture in Nepal. It is semi-anthropomorphic and semisymbolic, but certainly completely suggestive, without the deities in any iconographic form even in the least represented as individual deities of the pantheon. The pantheon is indeed a maze in Indian ideology of celestial form, the *Viśvarūpa,* but this is one of the most attractive *Viśvarūpa* representations, a unique one of which Nepal should be very proud. It belongs probably to the fifth-sixth century A. D. and has in it all the grace of a Gupta sculpture. It is, indeed, a strange fact that sometimes some of the most important clues to understanding a great theme of India, elaborated in heroic glory, are found outside India, though in such eloquent examples of portrayal they are absent in the mainland itself. One such is the *amṛtamanthana* scene that has been elaborated in Cambodia in Angkor Vat and Ankor Thom.

Mandhāta's rain of gold is represented better than in India, and more elaborately, in the Barabudur *stūpa* in Indonesia. Similarly here, in Nepal, Viśvarūpa is elaborated with great charm not only in the same form as it occurs in India. But even this superior charm is eclipsed by the rarity of this laconically expressed sculpture from Nepal. It is the only attempt at a type of suggestive and significant Viśvarūpa, a daring, symbolic, and yet informative and revealing sculpture. It constitutes a new commentary, as it were, on all the hymns that go to picture the glorious act of creation of the Almighty, and the concept itself of his creating the universe and entering it to enshrine it : *tat sṛṣṭvā tadevānu prāviśat*. This is indeed a great masterpiece by a master, a sculptor who was also probably a *sādhaka*, one who had realized the highest truth and was practised in offering to the Almighty as *pūjā vidhāna*, act of worship. As Śaṅkara has rightly said :

> *japo jalpaḥ śilpaṃ sakalam api mudrāviracanā gatiḥ, prādakṣimyakramaṇam aśanādyahutividhiḥ, praṇāmas saṃveśas sukham akhilam ātmārpaṇadṛśā saparyā paryāyas tava bhavatu yan me vilasitam* (*Saundaryalaharī* 27).

Every act, including the fashioning of a sculpture, painting a picture, offering a flower, or a song sung in all its melody, or a dance in all its charm of swaying limbs for the glory of the Almighty, all these are an act of worship. This rare sculpture in Nepal is an illustration of this and a glorious illustration.



Kalaśa as Viśvarūpa, multiform of the Almighty, 5th-6th cent. A.D., National Museum, Kathmandu, Nepal.

THE ORIGIN OF THE BUDDHIST MAṆḌALA

LAMA ANAGARIKA GOVINDA

Art is the living expression of religion. Religion without art is a dead system of dogmas which have no effect on life. As long as Buddhism was reduced to the narrow confines of a monastic community, it exhausted itself in dogmatic quarrels and discussions which had no effect on the lay community. But with the advent of Mahāyāna, Buddhism created the greatest works of art in India, and spread its message over the greater part of Asia, This was all the more remarkable as it was brought about not by the force of arms or the power of economics, but by the creative faculty of its cultural impact. By stimulating the dormant genius of various peoples, it created a burst of artistic activity in the form of architecture, sculpture, painting, poetry, and ritual music; and, on the popular level, the Jātakas (birth stories of the Buddha) excited the imagination of the common man and made him feel one with all living creatures, while the Bodhisattva ideal made him a participant in the quest for truth and liberation. It gave him the hope and confidence to follow the Buddha's way and strive after the highest aim, which up to then had been unobtainable in its remoteness and superhuman qualities.

It is a fallacy to say that the Buddha has been deified in Mahāyāna, in contrast to a strictly human personality in early Buddhism. Exactly the opposite is true. In the early schools of Buddhism the Buddha's position was so elevated that no human being could hope to attain it, and that even the gods were inferior beings. There is a story that the Buddha was once sitting in deep meditation at the foot of a tree in the midst of the forest. A hunter approached him and, seeing the immobile and luminous figure at the foot of the tree, asked him : 'Are you a tree-spirit ?' The Buddha answered, 'no'. 'Are you, perhaps a god ?' the hunter continued, and the Buddha again answered, 'no'. 'Are you a man, then ?', the hunter ventured. Where upon the Buddha answered, 'I am the Enlightened one, the teacher of gods and men, the Buddha, who has left behind him both these realms !' Even the gods were mortals, for they had to become men again in order to be released from the law of karma, the law that had temporarily freed them from want and suffering.

The Buddha was regarded as superior to the gods, and was therefore called 'the god of gods' *(devadevānām)*. It was possible for a man to be reborn in the realm of gods if he lived a life of godliness. Even the Buddha declared this, when he explained that the way to Brahmā consisted in a life in which the divine qualities attributed to Brahmā were realized. But it was regarded as presumptuous to strive after Buddhahood, for this was so exceptional a state that even the gods regarded it as beyond their powers, In the present Kalpa (a world-cycle, of astronomical and almost unimaginable length) only five Enlightened Ones, only five Buddhas, were thought to be possible; other Kalpas were even less favourable, if not altogether barren of Buddhas. Therefore the Arhat was regarded as the highest ideal that could be attained, if a man was earnest enough in his endeavour. This was the ideal of the saint who liberated himself, without being able to liberate others. His saintliness consisted in avoiding evil and temptation and in practising renunciation, but without having the universal knowledge of the Dharma and the power to reveal it to others.

The Mahāyāna, however, rejected this ideal because an Arhat's liberation consisted merely in overcoming individual suffering by total extinction of life, while a Buddha was able to attain perfect enlightenment even in his human body, and thus benefit all living beings. If this is possible, then everybody should strive for it, whether it is attainable in one or in many lives. After all, we have an eternity of time before us and we can lose nothing by attempting to strive after the highest ideal. Originally the Arhat, the Paccekabuddha (the solitary enlightened one who was not endowed with the capacity to teach the Dharma) and the Sammāsambuddha (Samyaksambuddha), the fully Enlightened One, seemed to be the models for the classification of three types of human being. But in the time of King Kanishka (first century A. D.) they were regarded as ideals of religious life, and from this point of view there could be no doubt that the ideal of the fully Enlightened one was the highest. Therefore, in each school of Buddhism adherents of the Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna) and of the Lesser Vehicle (Hīnayāna) can be found. One thing seems fairly clear in this yet unresolved problem and that is that Fa Hian and Yuan Chwang, whose chronicles brought the distinction into prominence, have given the Chinese versions of the terms Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna to institutions which they recognized as such, either by firsthand observation or by hearsay, institutions which in Buddhaghosha's school were known under quite different designations. As Rhys Davids says: "The extension of the name Mahāyāna was, and is, of a vague and fluid kind. Those to whom it was applied formed no closed unit. And this is true of most of the so-called 'sects'. They frequently overlapped in their heretical views."[1]

Only by the strictly conservative Theravādins, and similar 'orthodox' sects, was it regarded as presumptuous to strive after Buddhahood. Those to whom Buddhism was not only a dogma but a conviction of the heart regarded it as selfish to strive only after one's personal liberation, without the capacity or the possibility of sharing it with others. Thus Buddhahood was no more regarded as an unapproachable, unique state of mind, but as something attainable by every human being who

---

1. C. A. F. Rhys Davids, *Points of controversy (Kathā Vattu)*, pp. 45-46.

made the required effort. In this way, the Buddha became an example for every human individual, instead of being an unattainable ideal. He became the very essence and hope of humanity, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, or nationality. This was a new thing in ancient India, where religion and caste were bound by the soil.

Thus Buddhism became the first messenger of Indian culture in foreign countries. And, as we have said, this was not achieved through wars or weapons, or through political superiority or economic pressure, but by convincing others of the truth of the Dharma. This did not diminish the exalted state of the Buddha but brought it nearer to those who felt in harmony with his teaching. Even if the Buddha possessed divine qualities, these did not separate him from his followers, for they were convinced that those qualities were inherent in all living beings and needed only to be developed in order to realize enlightenment. In India human and divine properties were never as sharply divided as in the West, a fact that was never sufficiently realized by western scholars who were of the opinion that the Buddha had been deified in the Mahāyāna in contrast to his human origin. They unconsciously projected the Christian idea of God into the terminology of Buddhism where men can become gods and gods can become men, according to their Karma, or their spiritual development. The divine qualities of the Buddha are Wisdom and Compassion, but no real Buddhist would hold him responsible for the creation of the world, which is a unique feature of the biblical idea of God. If, therefore, we want to understand the historical and spiritual development of Buddhism, we have to admit that the conception of Buddhahood changed from an unapproachable, quasi transcendental state to an exalted, but attainable, ideal.

The Earliest Maṇḍala

In some of the first great monuments in memory of the Buddha, the overawed community did not dare to portray the Buddha in human form, but only symbolized his presence by showing his footprints in the form of lotuses or by showing his empty throne. The first reaction against the extreme deification of the Buddha, which tried to separate him from even his most devoted followers, was a personification of his image. In the colonial art of Gandhara portrayal of the human form often bordered on the trivial. Though there are exceptions, in general we have to admit that the bulk of Gandhara art was a poor imitation of Greek sculpture, giving more prominence to the folds of the robe than to the character of the face. Fortunately, hower, the indigenous spirit of devotion soon resulted in a more genuine art which no longer endeavoured to portray any particular human being, but tried to express serenity, peace, and inner happiness as the main characteristics of an enlightened one. The images of the Buddha assumed more and more expression of inwardness, of states of profound meditation, enlightenment and equanimity. There was something exalted and noble in all of them, but it was the nobility of wisdom and compassion which even nowadays moves and inspires us, whether we are religious-minded or not. There is something in them that is both human and divine, something that touches the heart, as no other-worldly power, no almighty world-creator, could do. Even when these images became stylized and conventionalized, they continued to remind us of qualities and lofty ideals, like *chiffres* of an ancient language, reminding us of past achievements. This ancient language expressing the characteristics of an enlightened one is retained mainly in the different *mudrās* or gestures of the Buddha. They are symbols of the diffent stages of spiritual development he went through and this development is what every true Buddhist has to go through, striving for ultimate liberation and enlightenment.

Thus it happened that even in the construction of the earliest monument of Buddhism known to us the people were not content merely to preserve the relics of the Buddha in a magnificent stūpa; they also made it a centre of worship by providing a path of circumambulation, enclosed in a stone-railing with four gates to mark the four most important events in the Buddha's life. The eastern gate symbolized his birth, the southern gate (which also marks the sun's zenith) his enlightenment, the western gate his first sermon at Isipathana, and the northern gate his final *parinirvāṇa*. They compared the Buddha, whose relics were enshrined in the centre of the stūpa or on its summit, with the spiritual sun whose rays illuminate the world, while those who received its rays moved, like planets around the sun, from left to right, on the *pradakṣiṇa pātha*, the path of circumambulation. Thus was the first maṇḍala created, and it became a model for all subsequent maṇḍalas, though they were perfected and refined in many ways. What became fundamental was the sun-oriented sequence of significant events in the life of Buddha Shākyamuni, whose life was the model for the most important stages in the life of all the Buddhas who appeared on earth (according to the scriptures). But there was one significant difference. His earthly birth was no longer felt to be as important as his spiritual awakening under the Bodhi-tree. Therefore his awakening was compared to the illumination by the first rays of the rising sun in the east, and the culmination of his career was seen in his decision to give himself and his message to the world, though he foresaw that only a few would be able to understand the profoundness of his doctrine. The west was reserved for the hour of meditation in which the eye of the dharma would be opened, the north was compared to the *parinirvāṇa* or the release from karma in the karma-free action, and the centre was occupied by the universal Buddha in the gesture of 'setting in motion the wheel of the law', the Dharmacakra, which has become the central symbol of Buddhism.

The Five Dhyāni-Buddhas

These five attitudes in the life of the historical Buddha correspond to the meditative experience of Buddhahood in the form of the five Jinas or Dhyāni-Buddhas, Akshobhya in the east of the maṇḍala, Ratnasambhava in the south, Amitābha in the west, Amoghasiddhi in the north, and Vairocana in the centre. They are distinguished by their colour, their gesture *(mudrā)* and their throne-bearer.

Their colours correspond to the directions of the sky and to the rays of the sun : white in the hour before sunrise in the east, yellow in the zenith (south), red at sunset, dark green at midnight (north), and blue in the centre. Blue and white are interchangeable in certain cases.

Even more important are the gestures *(mudrā)*. The first, in the east, is the earth-touching gesture *(bhūmisparśa-mudrā)* of Akshobhya; the second, in the south, is the gesture of giving *(dāna-mudrā)*, in which the palm of Ratnasambhava is turned upwards, the back of the hand resting on the right knee. The third, in the west, is the gesture of meditation of Amitābha (*ḍhyāna-mudrā);* and the fourth, in the north, is the gesture of reassurance *(abhaya-mudrā;* which says, 'don't fear') of Amoghasiddhi. In the centre sits Vairocana (the sun-Buddha) in the gesture of turning the wheel of universal law *(dharmacakra-mudrā)*.

In order to distinguish the historical Buddha Shākyamuni from Akshobhya, who displays the same gesture (earth-touching) as Shākymuni (sometimes shown in a guilded metal or clay-image), we have to observe the throne animal which in the case of Akshobhya is the white elephant, and in the case of Shākyamuni is the deer (because he delivered his first sermon in the deer-park of Isipathana). The throne-animal of Ratnasambhava is the horse, the symbol of liberation, because the Buddha left his home on a horse. The throne-bearer of Amitābha is the peacock (to symbolize the colourful rays of the setting sun), while the vehicle of Amoghasiddhi in the north is a mythical figure, half man, half bird, symbolizing the transition from the human to the superhuman state, which takes place in the mysterious darkness of night, invisible to the eye.

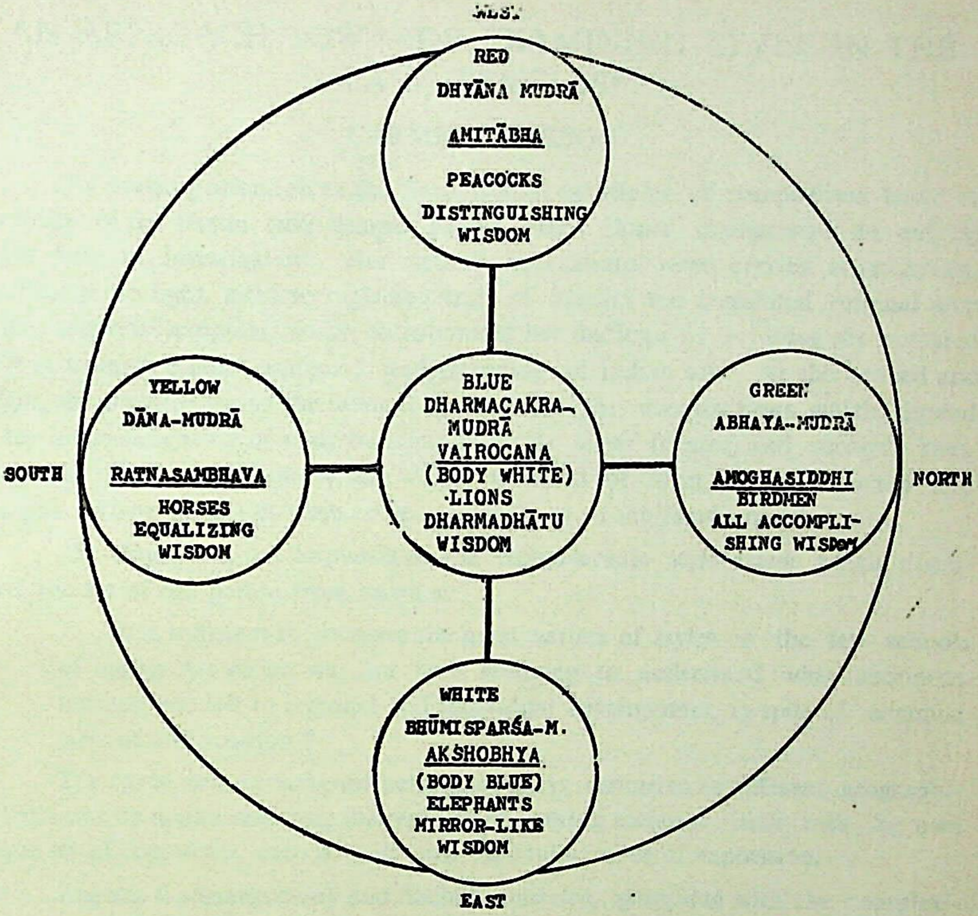
The functions of these Dhyāni-Buddhas, who are immanent as well as transcendent, for they transcend objective and limited existence, are clearly expressed in their gestures. They are an expression of those four attitudes of the mind, and, like the four parts of a symphony which end in a grand finale, they all merge and find their unity or universal completeness in the centre of the maṇḍala, the wisdom of the Dharma-sphere, in which the eternal truths have their being.

Of the four movements that lead to the centre, the first is the wisdom of the Great Mirror, in which we see the world as it is *(yathābhūtam)* and our own position in it. This is expressed in the gesture of touching the ground, the firm basis on which we stand, and which is at the same time the totality of our past. The second Wisdom, expressed by Ratnasambhava in the gesture of giving, is the Wisdom of the Essential Equality of beings, as they all have the same origin. The third attitude is

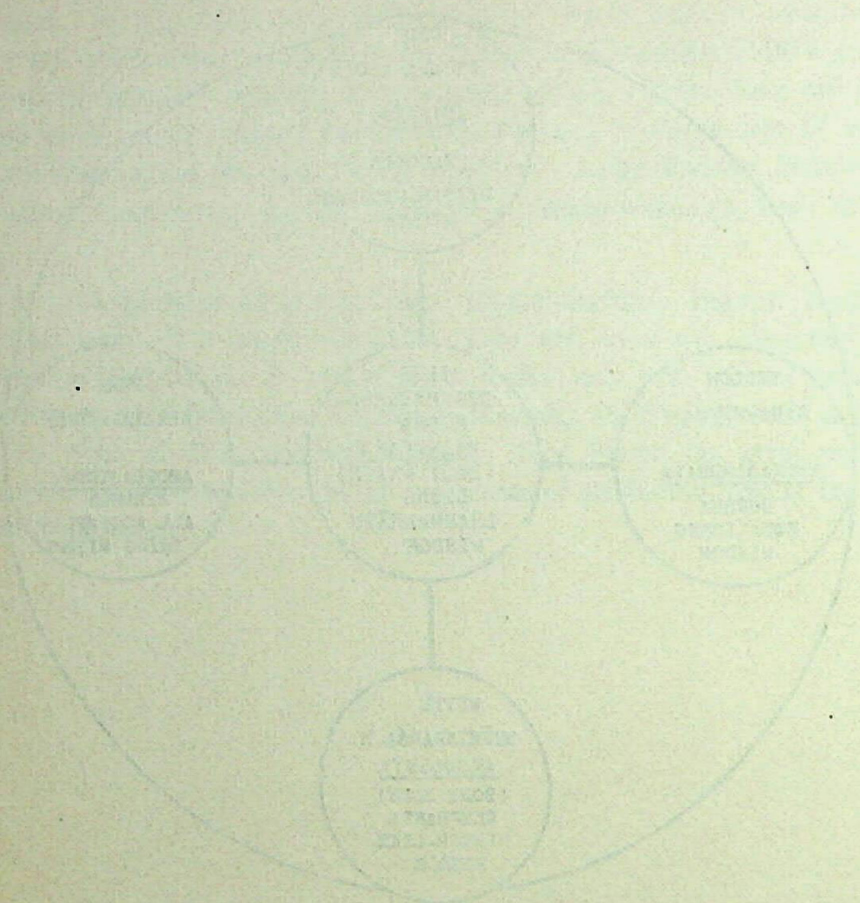
Distinguishing Wisdom of Amitābha, who is in the posture of meditation, in which we recognize not only the essential equality of living beings, but also the differences among them. By respecting them, we come to the fourth attitude, conditioned by tolerance and compassion, which finds its expression in Amoghasiddhi's gesture of blessing and reassurance, resulting in karma-free action. These four attitudes are combined in the centre, where Vairocana is enthroned in the gesture of setting in motion the wheel of the Dharma, the universal law. As the Buddha Shākyamuni is also sometimes seen in this mudrā, Vairocana is shown with two lions as throne-bearers.

Now the question arises : Are these Dhyāni-Buddhas less real because they are not historical ? My answer would be : They are more real, since they can be experienced in meditation. A mind-created reality may even take an outer form, because form is not different from emptiness (*śūnyatā)*, the Plenum-Void, as has been said in the Sūtra of Transcendental Wisdom. Here begins the great mystery of Reality which can only be solved in the experience of meditation and in the creative vision of immortal art.

The east-west axis is based on wisdom *(prajñā)*, the north-south axis is based on compassion *(karuṇā)*


WEST
RED
DHYĀNA MUDRĀ
AMITĀBHA
PEACOCKS
DISTINGUISHING WISDOM
YELLOW
DĀNA-MUDRĀ
SOUTH
RATNASAMBHAVA
HORSES
EQUALIZING WISDOM
BLUE
DHARMACAKRA-MUDRĀ
VAIROCANA
(BODY WHITE)
·LIONS
DHARMADHĀTU WISDOM
GREEN
ABHAYA-MUDRĀ
AMOGHASIDDHI
BIRDMEN
ALL ACCOMPLISHING WISDOM
NORTH
WHITE
BHŪMISPARŚA-M.
AKSHOBHYA
(BODY BLUE)
ELEPHANTS
MIRROR-LIKE WISDOM
EAST

The entrance into the Maṇḍala is from the east, nearest to the observer, as the Maṇḍala has to be drawn and coloured on the ground. It is not used during meditation, but before (like a map which is consulted before the journey). The Maṇḍala should not be used for self-hypnosis.



The entrance into the Mandala from the east [illegible] as the Mandala has to be drawn and coloured on the ground. It is not used for meditation, but rather like a map which is consulted before the journey. The Mandala should not be used for self-hypnosis.

AN APPROACH TOWARDS EXAMINING STYLE IN THE CAVE TEMPLES*

CARMEL BERKSON

By drawing attention to the fundamental principles of composition based on her study of the Hindu cave temple panels, Alice Boner inaugurated an entirely virgin field of investigation. Her seminal inspirations were arrived at intuitively. She brought to light hitherto neglected areas of inquiry and translated original texts of the *sthapatis* (sculptors) which corroborated her findings; by so doing she prepared the way towards a more profound understanding of Indian art. As she probed and taught, she revealed for us the internal dynamics of the compositions which depend on the interrelationship of a surrounding circle, its *bindu* (centre) and vertical, horizontal and diagonal divisions within which a world of form life is vitalized and charged. These principles seem to be applicable to all the Hindu panels.[1]

Dr. Boner also put emphasis on the characteristic style traits which distinguish the art of one period from another.

> It is sufficient to compare the great variety of styles in the few schools of Indian Art which we are here studying to understand what enormous latitude was left to regional and individual development, in spite of common laws of composition.[2]

The caves were carved over periods of many centuries at different geographical locations by artists reflecting the tempers of varying societies, each with its own unique set of cognitions, each with its own particular mode of expression.

Ananda Coomaraswamy and Stella Kramrisch, grappling with the complexities, established overall modes of approach towards the analysis of style. A climate was thereby created in which others could proceed to examine the particulars.[3]

It seems the proper time now to attempt to define certain basic criteria by which the differences in style which do exist can be explained and understood within the context of the Indian experience. We should make a preliminary effort to systematize our methods of educating the contemporary student or layman who has not been given the proper opportunity either in the schools or in public education. A more detailed examination can only lead to a broader understanding.

---

* Photographs by the author

[1] In 1978 Dr. Boner intended to analyze the panels at Elephanta which she believed were constructed according to the same principles, but her projected trip was cut short unexpectedly at the last moment.

[2] Alice Boner, *Principles of Composition in Hindu Sculpture*, Leiden, 1962, p. 36.

[3] See the works of Anand, Hallade, Sundararajan, Spink, Rawson, Parimoo and especially Sivaramamurti among others for interesting approaches to style in Indian Sculpture.

Years of sitting around the monuments have convinced me that most educated visitors have forgotten how tho read the symbols, and thus, unlike their more intuitively aware ancestors, they leave the caves untransformed. If we examine how the sculptures were executed, step by step, we will hopefully have some success in our attempt to recapture essential meanings.

Such technical interest in the ways that the sculptor performed in no way indicates a negation of the reality that principally the images are vehicles of worship and not works of art. But because of the misunderstandings and negative attitudes imposed by some foreigners in the past, the aesthetic response which must naturally always be involved in the process of contacting the sacred has been submerged in many cases. It is necessary to recapture that capacity with which the medieval worshipper identified himself both kinetically and psychologically with the internal states reflected by the statues.

Always keeping in mind the universal applicability of Dr. Boner's teachings and her modes of working, I think we are more likely to achieve some initial success by examining the particular panels, one by one, than if we continue to generalize about sites or the accomplishments of dynasties.

No attempt to fit the development of style of the panels into delimited categories can succeed, of course, since this would make a simplistic mockery out of the enormity of variegated forms in Indian art. But the art of all cultures does follow developmental patterns. It has always seemed to work out in practice that the developing sculptor, left to his own devices and not trained in any particular school, in his quest for growth, repeats the history of the race, so to speak, moving from a primitive abstraction, towards classic harmony and on to the problems involved in baroque. Wolfflin's theories seem to be applicable both to various cultures and to the individual artist.

It is therefore useful to keep some categories in mind, even while examining the nuances which inhibit us from an arbitrary adherence to any strict set of rules. There is no direct development from one style to another in the caves, and styles do not exist separately in isolation, but rather there are variations within the same cave and even within the same panel. We should become aware of these variations in order to be able to gain appreciation of what is actually here.

In some cases there is a definite tendency towards one particular mode of expression, though often there is also deviation from this dominant style. For example, at Ellora, we can classify Cave 21 *(Rameśvara)* and Cave 14 *(Rāvaṇa-Ka-Khai)* as basically classical in spirit, a classic art unique to India, and this will become evident as we proceed with the analysis. At Elephanta, on the other hand, enormous variations defy this kind of uniform classification. In Cave 15 *(Daśa Avatāra)* at Ellora, there is a definite affinity with some aspects of what we call baroque, but only partially so, even here. Although this tendency needs to be acknowledged, we should first and foremost pay attention to the startling particulars which exist in each of the individual panels.

I would like to suggest a list of criteria by which we can continually examine the sculpture of the panels. I do not intend for this list to be rigidly adhered to; it should be used only as a guide. If the category turns out not to be useful or only limited in its applicability, it should be discarded and others may be considered. This list should be a fluid and changing one.

For the sake of simplicity I have used the word panel when describing the carvings in the cave, although I am aware of its implications of the carvings being on a flat surface.

The criteria are stated in question form when that seems to be the most natural way. What is defined will hopefully be applicable to all the Hindu cave temple panels. Attention will be focused on Cave 21, the earliest Hindu shrine at Ellora with briefer references to Cave 14, which shows marked affinities in iconography and style.

When polarities are stated, the rigid terminology speaks only of the hypothetical, since rarely do the works of art fall into either one or the other extremes. The definition is only a means of identifying and organizing, in order to have a reference point from which to examine the gradual, inevitable and expected variations.

Suggested Criteria for Examining Style in the Cave Temples

I. *Faces and Gestures :*

Faces and gestures establish mood and convey meaning.

II. *Axial Orientation :*

Forms are aligned along vertical or diagonal axes. Which of these is stressed determines the dynamics of the panel.

III. *Three dimensionality, Volume and Depth :*

The wall carvings show great variation in depth. At one extreme is a flat bas relief and at the opposite, a chamber like environment with concave background which sometimes eliminates corners. Figures are flat or volumetric, frontally oriented or breaking frontality, are elongated and thin or are solid and stocky or the intermediate stages in between. The position of these masses relative to the back wall and to each other varies. The background (ground) either dominates the mass or the volumes can stand independently, and some can even be considered to be like free standing statues, so that the viewer is able to walk around to both sides and to see many different aspects.

IV. *Simultaneous vs. Linear or Partial Viewing* :

The composition may be composed of closed configurations easily contained within an outline. These can be isolated by the camera or the eye without difficulty. A system of closed patterns may balance one another more or less symmetrically and they are subordinate to the unified whole. A good balance of the various weights within the composition is maintained, and each pattern finds its counterpart someplace else, and though these forms group themselves in complicated ways, the parts do come to rest and create a composition larger than the whole. All the parts are perceived simultaneously.

Or, in complete contrast, single figures may be lined up so that they occupy each their own space in the field, and they may either stand alone, or have the tendency to be in a mutual or reciprocal relationship with one or more surrounding figures to form temporary and various groupings. In the latter case, the totality of the panel cannot be apprehended at once.

V. *How Space and Volume Interact* :

A wide range of variations occur. Volumes may be large in mass or small, flat or carved in the round : they may be numerous, thus fragmenting the field or limited to a few, when they tend to be surrounded by a great deal of space. The volumes combined may form patterns or have the tendency to be part of an interchangeable grouping.

Space may either be used to elaborate upon and intermingle with the volumes or its inclusion in the field is avoided, depending on the purposes intended. Within the very same cave different approaches exist.

VI. *Light* :

What is the relationship between the source of light and the panels ? Is the light direct or reflected ? What about the dark passages which are unlit ?

VII. *Proportion and Measure* :

Are canons of proportion correct or have exact and harmonious relationships been sacrificed for the benefit of some other dominating principle ?

VIII. *Scale* :

What is the scale relative to the viewer, and what is the relationship of the figures within the panel to one another and to the others in the cave ?

IX. *Mobility and Energy* :

Is the depiction of mobility of primary importance for the artist, and if so which conventions are utilized for expressing the gradations from lyrical, contained mobility towards the extremities of frenzied action ?

X. *Surface, Contour, Transitions* :

How are the surfaces of the volumes treated ? What is the character of the outline ? How are transitions effected ?

XI. *The Treatment of the Ornamented Areas* :

How does the artist conceive of ornamentation in relation to the plain masses ? What is the degree of refinement of the carving ? What is the summary effect of the ornamentation in each particular case ?

XII. *Relationship of the Composition to the Frame. Multiple Views* :

Does the frame dominate and contain the elements within it, enclosing the move outward into the cave with the boundary of the frame being submissive to magnetizing forces outside of the frame ?

Is there one dominant, or perfect viewpoint, or do the views change with the shifting position of the viewer ?

XIII. *Time* :

Does the panel capture a moment or represent events which are separated sequentially in time ? How are the episodes of the narrative spatially juxtaposed within the panel, and how is involvement of the deities in temporal time depicted ?

XIV. *Stylistic Techniques to Depict the Absurd* :

To graphically illustrate the concept of *māyā*, the artist uses devices to shock and remind. What are they ?

XV *Rasas* :

How does the artist manage to have his works reflect the inner states of the worshipper ?

XVI. *Tendencies Away from the Abstract Towards Naturalistic Portrayals* :

Where do we find some relaxation of the Indian artists' inherent tendency toward abstraction of form ?

XVII. *Innovations :*

Sculptors, working in creative freedom, at times introduced innovations which often were not followed up by others.

Cave 14 seems to have been carved somewhat later than Cave 21, and influences from the earlier cave can be directly traced. What the two caves share in common is the classic approach, where the reliefs are comfortably contained within the frame, there is a balance of parts subordinate to the whole, the ground of each panel is flat. Vertical figures are outlined by continuous, geometrical flowing outlines. Though the figures have some volume, the backs are usually only implied : the sculptor's concept is limited to what we can see from front or sides.

Many themes and motifs are similar. Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (figs. 3, 4) and the Rāvaṇa panels (figs. 5, 6) are similar in composition, the *Sapta Mātrikās* (figs. 7, 8, 27, 28, 29, 30) with Kāla, the god of death and his attendants, (or Kālī) (figs. 9, 10), to their left are positioned along the south wall, in both caves, and they share some structural similarities. In addition, both caves have a Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī (figs. 11, 12) and Śiva Dancing (figs. 13, 14). *Dvārapālas* (door guardians) (figs. 15,16) can be found in front of the shrine, and there is a relationship between the column brackets. In both the shrine is large and has a *pradakṣiṇa* (circumambulatory) path.

In cave 14, however, a syncretist movement has replaced the earlier concentration on the sole worship of Śiva : the theme of Gaja Lakshmī, Varāha and Vishnu with Lakshmī and Śrī have been added. The Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī (figs. 17-20) and Kārtikeya (fig. 21) of Cave 21 are absent in Cave 14, and Durgā with Lion and Andhakāsura (fig. 22) are new there.

While the iconography and subject matter is richer, and while a number of panels : Śiva Dancing in Lalita (fig. 14), Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī . (fig. 12), Varāha and Gaja Lakshmī are beautifully carved with great complexity, a deterioration in execution, attention to detail, measure and clarity of articulation of outline is also in evidence in many of the other panels in Cave 14. Only Śiva Dancing in Lalita is superb. There are some other great moments, but one has to go around looking for special views. The two caves differ in excellence of style. This will become evident as we proceed.

I. *Faces and Gestures*

There is more than tranquility expressed in the sea of faces of gods and goddesses and attendants (figs. 23, 24, 25). The placid quietude and impenetrable expressions reflect the psychic state of the worshipper transformed.

As he enters the cave from the temporal and rational world, the worshipper encounters a host of representations of his inner self, and he enters into a relationship with them. He has been invited and has thus set foot into an environment where the deities and their attendants abide, and it is here that he is changed psychically as he strives towards another level of his being. The cave's influence is not unfamiliar to him since in his temporal day-to-day existence he often has encountered super-rational experiences. He has a subliminal recall of his own infancy, he has dreamt, made love, has been mesmerized by natural beauty or he has had individual theophanic encounters. He is thus prepared to be captivated by these many somnambulent faces. They beckon and comfort, and each itself appears to be in a state of beatitude, each represents the fundamental mental state which in India is known as *śama*, serenity. Each will help in the achievement of grace.

Only rarely are specific facial expressions depicted.[4] Every face is lifted above or beyond the anxieties and complexities of the world outside the caves. So the *āgamas* prescribe. When light shines on the countenances, reflected in them are those reconciliations which the seeker may enjoy in his contact with the deities. In that way he is able to encounter the god within himself.

It is this hypnotic state that prepares the worshipper to then enter the shrine where the *liṅga* discharges its energies.

The symbolism of the *mātrikās* (fig. 7) is manifest and pervades the cave. This virtually *is* the cave of the *mātrikās*. Here the innocence of the newborn with his undifferentiated emotional responses is reawakened, he is bathed in the light and warmth of the mother, he is thus prepared to be embraced by the cavity of the cave.

All the figures in all the panels are linked within this supernatural atmosphere, a transcendent sphere where pain does not exist, conflict is reconciled.

This is the meaning of the *mātrikās*, who at Ellora, in Caves 14, 16, 21 and 22[5] are flanked by the figure of death, Kāla (figs. 9, 10). From the moment of birth, the deities and especially the *mātrikās* protect and cancel out temporal anxiety. In the natural cycle of life, death—Kāla, time, the final elimination—holds the seeds of rebirth in the *mātrikās*.

In a vertically oriented world, where statues stand or sit upright, amidst the stillness of the faces, it is the gestures of each and every participant in the panel narratives that convey essential meanings and also a sense of noble, quiet mobility. The gesture is of the hands, the limbs and of the body. It transmits energy from one mass to another, uniting two individuals, or groups of individuals in a community of muted action.

For example, in the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar, upper register in Cave 21 (fig. 24), the male attendant in the corner of Pārvatī's side gently touches the female in front of him, and she in turn carries this touch to the plaits of hair of Pārvatī, and Pārvatī then touches the attendant on her right. In this closed circular cluster, energy passes and flows from one figure to the other.

---

[4] See below, p. 84.

[5] In cave 22, Chamuṇḍa also is shown in skeletal form.

Every gesture awakens possibilities and sensibilities. It is the silent instrument in the narrative, telling us what is implied and never spoken; it gives importance and emphasis to each protagonist.

The gestures are mild, never harsh; they nevertheless reflect the subtle spirit which is buoyant and hinting at potential action. They capture that instant in the silent dream sequences which stirs the inner soul of the beholder to become a participant in the bustling and crowded but noiseless and hushed environment.

II. *Axial Orientation*

In the progression of the development of Hindu style through the years of its evolution, there was a marked change from stress put on vertical orientation of the major forms towards its later abandonment in favor of stress on the diagonal. In the earlier Buddhist *stūpa* reliefs, especially at Amaravati, when ferment or activity implying extreme mobility was the topic of the narrative, some figures were placed along a diagonal axis. But in Cave 21, at Aihole and Badami, in a sterner, more classical mode, we find a reassertion of the vertical dominance. Later Ellora and Elephanta became the fascinating laboratories for a renewed departure from the vertical and a rediscovery of the diagonal axis.

All the statues in Cave 21 are positioned vertically. Most of the figures stand or sit erect, and the parts deviate only slightly from the *madhya sūtra* (median line). In the Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī panel (figs. 17-20), the head, neck and torso are aligned in an even stricter adherence to the plumb line. Restrained flow of contained movement is emphasized.

Wherever there is a slight divergence from strict verticality, as in the *dvārapālas*, it enhances the lyrical quality and reduces the hierarchical tendencies. Exceptions are the playful *gaṇas* (Śiva's host of dwarf-like creatures) surrounding Śiva's bull Nandī in the lower register of the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 26) and in the horizontally aligned *vidyādharas* (flying figures). Only the figure of Kāla (fig. 9) obeys different principles. The torso leans, his arms are bent in angular directions.

This, in conjunction with the straight vertical lines of the frames, which echo and repeat the dominant verticality to accentuate it, is the primary characteristic of this very classic style. The verticality imparts a formality and an ordered appearance. It defines a style which is more moderate than greatly dynamic, more precise and severe than abandoned. However, nothing is static nor lacking in vitality. Figures stand straight, with dignity; some are relaxed in very modified *tribhaṅga* (three bends to the body) within a very limited prescribed set of measurements. The result is a classic harmony, enlivened in the cases of the Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī (fig. 11) and Śiva Dancing in Chatura (fig. 13), by the implication of mobility inherent in the narrative itself.

Each monument reveals the secrets of the deepest psychic forces of the society responsible for its erection, and in it we can read the character of the times. Restraint and balance characterize the spirit of the age. Its people seem to have had an inordinate sense of discipline. They may have been content, understated, calm, exhibiting little sense of turmoil and anxiety. There is a sense of almost bourgeoise stability, if indeed little explosive energy, which was to characterize the later age in Cave 15 and 16 at Ellora.

III. *Three Dimensionality, Volume, Depth*

In the early centuries, we can recognize two concurrent styles. On the one hand, reliefs at Sanchi, Bharhut, Bodh Gaya, Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda were shallow with figures predominantly flat and depth indicated, in the main, conceptually. On the other hand a parallel tradition, stemming from Gandhara and Mathura was impelled toward expressing the three dimensional. Experimentation there found solutions in techniques which included the manipulation of planes; the rupture of frontality, the acknowledgement of cubic structure etc.

In some of the carvings in caves, at Bhaja, for example, figures were without volume, but at Pitalkhora, Karla, Nasik and the Varaha cave at Udayagiri, a closer relationship existed between free standing sculpture and its counterpart on the panel, although the carving there is also primarily flat, and the ground dominates.

Cave 21 is a landmark very well worth studying in detail in regard to the advancements having to do with volume and depth.

In all the panels, frontality dominates, major figures face forward, they have some volume, but they are not carved completely in the round. An exception is the figures of Pārvatī, which in all the panels deviate somewhat from frontality, and Śiva himself, in the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3) is shown seated in half turn. In general, attendants are shown facing the central figure, as in Kārtikeya (fig. 21) and Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī (fig. 11); their bodies are thus not shown strictly from the front.

Different rules apply to the *mātrikā* panel (fig. 7) where eight grand heads with individual headdresses are carved in the round with deliberate and meticulous attention paid to the achievement of perfect articulation of outlines, of linear clarity and of attention to ornamental details. Each headdress is uniquely arranged, majestically eminent. In shape, all approximate cylinders, except for Varāhī's conical tresses. In fact it is the carving from the top of the headdress, leading to a long thin neck, then the robust and rounded shoulders and predominantly spherical breasts that have made the *mātrikās* famous as the epitome of classic grandeur and beauty.

In addition to the three dimensional headdresses, the seated position of the *mātrikās*, their thighs more or less perpendicular to the wall, is an indication of the artists' interest in extending the area of space penetration forward. The masses move outward from the wall and control the area of space in front. Astounding innovations are thus created, for example, in Kaumārī's figure seen from the east (fig. 28), the placement of the babies, and the extension of the arms. Such complexities require forethought. Prior to his initial confrontation with the rock face the artist must have a complete understanding of techniques of carving in three dimensions. These volumetric forms, released from the block of stone and fashioned into spherical harmonies are bold and robust solid bodies. At other places, similar *mātrikās* were being carved as independent figures, for example in those exhibited at Gwalior and New Delhi, but it is the application to the walls of the cave that must be noted especially here.

The backs of the *mātrikās,* however, are flat—this is true of figures throughout the cave—the torsos are very short, their importance is minimized, although we do see signs of experimentation in the figures of Maheśvarī, Kaumārī and Varāhī. They deviate from frontality at the shoulder level, and Kaumārī even has a second right arm placed behind her upper one, and her thigh slants across her seat. Her right thigh and calf are separated from the parent stone (fig. 28); this part of the *mātrikā* is an interesting example of the statue which escapes the domination of its background.

In the Śiva Dancing in Chatura, the three dimensionality is modified, except at the tilted head, which, seen from the side, (fig. 31) is a unique and glorious mass of exquisitely carved strands of hair, or flowing *jaṭās*. This head has breadth and depth and is carved in the round. The ground dominates, the figures are of the wall, held by it; unaffected by gravitational forces, they do not stand on their feet. The ground is still very flat or nearly flat here.

All the arms of the dancer return to his own body, or to the back wall, closing the composition. In Elephanta, the arms sometimes extend outward into space, or are broken off because they had been so extended.

There is no cubical imperative in this panel which is essentially still carved as a relief, and there is a good deal of variation in the amount of modelling in the round. The dancer's sides are indicated but not emphasized. Between his legs, the head of Bhringi accentuates concavity.

The device of carving one or more shoulders of the same figure right behind the other soon became part of the repertoire of the sculptors who sought ways to penetrate into the depth of the rock. Though there are precedents at Deogarh, we encounter it here in an early version in a more pronounced fashion. One right forearm is also carved behind the other. The left arms are carved on different though shallow planes. This is also the case in the Kārtikeya (fig. 21), the Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī, (fig. 11) and the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3) panels, though in the right arms of the latter the more archaic device of carving the arms one above the other on the same plane of the flat wall is retained.

To the right of the dancer, a group of five figures and a baby, Pārvatī's entourage[6] (fig. 32) displays the same interest in creating spacial depth which is much in evidence in the somewhat earlier paintings at Ajanta and in the Temptation of Buddha panel on a wall of the Chaitya hall, Cave 26, there.[7] There figures are stepped backward and upward. Pārvatī's figure is whole, but to indicate they are behind her, two other figures are only shown partially on shallow receding planes. There is no diminution of their sizes, but rather, the opposite is true. The head of Nandikeśvara[8] along with his headdress, is recognizably larger than the others. Another musician is comfortably lodged between Pārvatī's head and Śiva's left elbow. Only her head, shoulders and a hand holding a vīnā are carved very flatly. The artist is interested in giving an appearance of depth by mere suggestion. Even in this group there is a refreshing diversity of forms which are brought together as a solid unit by many similar elements, for example, the horizontal bands on the headdresses of the females. The figures are compact and there is no space between them. They are contiguous and, though each remains totally independent with notable clarity of outline, each single volume is also in close alliance with all the other volumes. The group of musicians to the left of Śiva is more stabile. The artist also experiments with a slight turn of Pārvatī's figure, whose back is not attached to the ground but is slightly turned toward the side.

This posture of Pārvatī is repeated again in the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3) panel. Here she is seated in a more exaggerated position, her shoulders and the pillow she rests her hand on are perpendicular to the ground. The left shoulder is higher than the right. The same partially perpendicular position is given to Śiva so that they enclose a hollow space. Here is the beginning of the rupture from frontality; the artist gropes for depth. Three levels are established.

---

[6] I refer to this figure seated with legs crossed as Pārvatī, although Gopinath Rao and Sivaramamurti think she is a musician and that the standing figure with baby is Pārvatī. But since all the other Pārvatīs have a separation from the wall, this seems a logical conclusion.

[7] Very pronounced plane recession already is in evidence at Pitalkhora in the 2nd century B. C. and later sophisticated techniques elaborated at Mathura, for example in the Bacchanalian group now in New Delhi.

[8] Sivaramamurti's identification.

Pārvatī's figure is elegantly modelled to emphasize her very round breasts and elongated, narrow, full, firmly modelled thighs. But the background here and in all the panels remains essentially flat, holding a basically shallow relief.

Allusion and suggestion to create an illusion is yet another way to make a statement about depth. Following the tradition inherited from the earliest stone carvings at Gandhara, Pitalkhora, etc., and passed on to the paintings at Ajanta, there are times when the sculptor preferred to make a partial reference to his subject rather than to carve the complete figure.

When this partial figure appears on successively recessed planes, or is placed behind a figure larger than itself, its purpose is to create an illusion of depth. This is the effect even when the partial figures, or merely a head (like the one that bites the tail in the *gaṇa* register of Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar, fig. 26), right above another figure on the same plane.

There is a clarity of outline and great skill in placement of the figures one above the other as in the two wrestlers locked in a compact embrace. The illusion is created that they are surrounded by space, though their heads are more or less on the same level.

A view from the side of the Rāvaṇa panel shows that Pārvatī's coiffure (fig. 33) is voluminous, and her figure is removed sufficiently from the ground to allow Śiva's arm to encircle it. Śiva's headdress is also carved with ample attention paid to three dimensionality, but it does not match the majesty of the headdresses of either the *mātrikās* or the dancer's.

In the Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī panel (figs. 17-20) participants are placed on a flat ground within a very narrow compartment. Only very highly skilled artists could manage to convey the idea of so much depth on such a shallow plane. Several techniques are used. First Śiva (fig. 18) is shown emerging from the mouth of a *makara* (crocodile or composite animal with marine associations) from amidst a foliation of vegetative plants which symbolize a pond. The plants spill over the frame at the only place in the cave where the formality and binding dominance of the frame is ruptured.[9] Subtle plane differentiations are manipulated so as to give the indication of depth. In order to fit six major figures into such a small space, the device of turning the figure away from frontality and superimposing parts of the bodies of the ones in front on the ones behind is used to good advantage. And when necessary, as with the figure above the *makàra* Śiva, the lower part of his body is hidden to create the illusion that he stands behind Śiva. Thus the artist leaves himself enough space to keep the figures moderately round, and has right here invented a new mode of working, making variation in already familiar techniques, compressing energies into a more concentrated area.

---

[9] See Section XII.

In the central panel these devices are again utilized, with less variation of plane surface. Only rarely, since Gandhara times, were figures shown in profile as Pārvatī is here, in three dimensions. She faces the frontally oriented Śiva directly, her svelte legs, breasts and arms are sensuous and deeply modelled. Her figure in profile provides a space for Chandra to insert his rounded pot of honey in between Śiva and Pārvatī. By this simple device the artist creates a complicated space arrangement : the pot is embedded within a circle of space created by the outline of the clasped hands and of the arms of the god and goddess.

And in the last panel (fig. 20), to the viewers left, the left shoulder of Brahmā is brought forward, away from the background; he is thus in a semi-turn.

Though this paper deals primarily with the sculpture of the panels, it is important to note that some of the figures within and directly outside have ample volume. The *dvārapāla* guarding the south part of the door in the *antarāla* (vestibule fronting the shrine) (fig. 15) with left shoulder and bent leg separated from the background stands in all his grandeur with a gentle sway, elegantly proportioned. There is grace, quiet harmony and measure, another masterpiece of classic art. Yet here too, the back is flat, part of the wall.

The *chowribearer* (fan holder) (fig. 34) on the right of the Rāvaṇa panel, the *śālābhañjikās* (women with *śālā* flowers) (fig.35) surmounting the columns and Gaṅgā and Yamunā flanking the outside of the cave are invested with more solidity and robustness. Their origins are in Mathura. Although many have beautiful headdresses, unlike the *mātrikās*, primary emphasis is focused on all the amplitude of their femininity; large breasts, thighs, hips exaggerated, they stand in modified *tribhaṅga*, leaning weight more on one leg than the other.

This attention given to the fecund nature of the female and to her vegetative counterparts is in evidence in many of these luscious figures adorning the columns and walls. The swellings of the female form inherent in the intuitions concerning reproductive life had to be expressed with a chisel sensitive enough to extract roundness from the stone and make it as shapely as the original model. This made the three dimensional approach imperative. In his dream involvement with the deities, the worshipper is infused first and foremost with his own primal energies and those he intuits in nature. By kinetically awakening his responses, the sculptor prepares for awakening to the gods, and to the energy in the *liṅga*.

To avoid categorizing for convenience and fitting diverse and often incompatible material into compartmental niceties, another characteristic of the cave and of other Hindu caves must be brought to notice.

Just as the term classic seemed to begin to be applicable to the unified experience in the whole cave, the figure of Kārtikeya (fig. 27), standing in rigid, frontal position, two feet aligned symmetrically facing forward, four arms balanced, looking as much like a Greek Kourous as any male figure of Indian origin can look, appears with many archaic characteristics intact. Parts of the body tend to be separate entities—though there is a good deal of fluidity of outline—there is little flexibility, little sense of mobility, the knee caps are indicated as well as the shin bone dividing the calfs into planes. The uninterrupted knee tc waist outer curve is shaped like a bow, This Kārtikeya is heir to a long tradition of male deities, standing stiff-legged in frontal position.

Yet at his side, the goat headed attendants rest weight on one foot, shoulder planes differ, they deviate from frontality. I would like to suggest that this is the earliest carving at Ellora. Durgā across the chamber also exhibits early features.

In cave 14, while there is still an interest in the voluptuous, there is a marked decrease in the ability of the sculptor to convey via his skill as craftsman, the essences of his instinctual feelings for ripeness and the permeation of life forces. This is true especially in the following panels : Vishnu with Lakshmī and Śrī, Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 4), Rāvaṇa (fig. 6) and Gaja Lakshmī. Little vitality exudes from these panels. Though there are some attempts at creating depth, for example, the Śiva-Pārvatī couple of Rāvaṇa, short, stocky and rigid accompanying figures indicate a loss of connection with the primal life forces that inspired Cave 21.

Yet we can still enjoy the Bhūdevī figure in the Varāha panel for her rounded, sensuous attributes as well as Pārvatī in Śiva Dancing in Lalita (fig. 14). After being thus depressed, we are surprised to find that the whole panel of Umāmaheśvara is animated, and Pārvatī has now acquired an elongated torso (fig. 36). For the first time her dimensions approximate Śiva's and this growth in her importance will come to fruition in Cave 15. Her longish torso is placed on a refreshing angle; and the leg positions deviate from the *madhya sūtra*. In a view from the east, her hairdo is especially pleasing and so is the interaction of space, line and volume with Śiva. The gesture of Śiva's left hand, fingers mobile, enlivens the panel, and the attendants themselves are not static. We must consider the various talents of individual artists as well as societal influences and patronage in our investigations into style and chronology.

Śiva in the Andhakāsura panel (fig. 22) has two solid arms behind his right upper arm. These are gropings in the direction of deepening the background. But all the backgrounds in Cave 14 are essentially flat, and depth is minimal.

Mahishāsuramardinī's rounded figure (fig. 12), like a tilted figure eight, is the rhythmical exception, and it is placed within a deeper compartment which contains a figure with a forcefully extended hip, a small waist and longer torso-groin measurements. The buffalo has a more rounded appearance than the one in Cave 21.

The general tendency here is to have little depth, volume, or even space. Even the magnificent Śiva Dancing in Lalita (fig. 14) is flat on a flat ground.

The *mātrikās* in Cave 14 (fig. 8) are tall proud beauties, but more emphasis has been given to their height and less to the refinement and jeweller's precision in carving the headdresses, and the faces are made to be less important. The delineation of form, both in ornament and of the whole group suffers from lack of clarity so that it is harder to examine each as an individual. And there is some repetition in the leg positioning. Space between them is also sparser.

Nevertheless, they are elegant creatures. They too have flat bodies, and they seem to be part of the wall, especially since they reside in the back in the dark recesses of the *pradakṣiṇa* (circumambulatory) path.

But while there are these regressions, at the same time, another invention, a product of the artist's fecund imagination, has been introduced here. The mother and standing child (fig. 37) form a group of two figures which has a good amount of intervening space and could theoretically be circumscribed. This is a first example of a mother and standing child group, possibly in all history.

IV. *Simultaneous vs. Linear or Partial Viewing*

In cave 21 configurations in many of the panels are composed of closed patterns which interact. The compositions have the tendency to come to rest and achieve stability, though the internal dynamics keep the elements in continuous movement, and the panel is never static.

In the Śiva Dancing in Chatura (fig. 13), there are four groups which can be easily isolated. Of these, three, the male musicians and the flying figures, are easily circumscribed. Only the group to the right of Śiva (fig. 31) is marked by a certain amount of ambiguity. While on the one hand it can be seen easily as three or four figures (we are discounting the broken seated figures between Śiva and Pārvatī), it can also easily be seen as subgroups of varying associations. The dominant and stabilized group, however, is the one which includes the four figures together (or five, counting the child).

These and the patterns in the Rāvaṇa (fig. 5) panel are so arranged in relation to one another within the frame that the whole of the composition remains larger than the outlined parts, and all are in relationship to each other. Solid and outlined groups stay put in their appropriate places and are stabilized there. We can take in the whole panel in an instant and then begin the process of investigation of the parts.

But in the panel of Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3), especially in the lower register, where the *gaṇas* sport with Nandī, (fig. 25) the figures are more or less equally balanced in weight throughout, and little space is permitted. It is not possible to apprehend the whole at one time. A temporary pattern can be observed by imposing limits from the outside, for example, to frame a photograph. It is possible to choose a group of say, three *gaṇas* (fig. 38), drop one and add two (fig. 39), then drop these two others (fig. 40), etc. The field is agitated, and only the large stabilizing form of Nandī temporizes the dizzying effects. The entourage of Śiva in the top register of this panel (fig. 3) is subject to some of these principles.

It is in the Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī (figs. 17-20) that these tendencies are most in evidence. With very little space provided between more or less equally sized figures, it is difficult to fix or stabilize the groups and keep them stationary. Though the three parts of the tryptich are separated by framing, the scene depicting the marriage, with its larger figures in the middle, acts as a centralizing force. Simultaneously, however, the very same figures are in active relationship to the ones on either side. Forces move inwards on the one hand and are drawn away by other forces, on the other hand. The very same figures, if associated with either their left or right attendants, will be seen to participate in other groups. For the photographer there are some twelve different arrangements within this central panel to create different photographs. Syncopation triumphs over stability.

Thus right here in the same cave, we have a contrast between those panels or areas within the panel that permit and invite simultaneous viewing and those in which the apprehension of the composition is of a succession of partial concepts.

Section IV and V are thus linked, because the question of how much space there is between the figures and also how the weights are balanced has a good deal to do with how we see the panels or a specific area of the panel.

In Cave 21, the Durgā (fig. 11), the Kārtikeya (fig. 21) and the Kāla (fig. 9) panels can be apprehended instantly without ambiguity. In the upper register of the Śiva and Pārvatī playing Chausar (fig. 3), in the Śiva Dancing in Chatura (fig. 13) and in the Rāvaṇa (fig. 5) certain areas within the larger panel have a tendency towards the formation of partial and interchangeable groupings, though the larger whole is dominant. But in the lower register of the Chausar and in the Marriage (figs. 17-20) panel, the primary tendency is toward partial viewing in succession, except in the section to the viewer's left, where Brahmā is blessing Śiva and Pārvatī. There we return to a condition of stability and instantaneous apprehension of the whole.

V. *How Space and Volume Interact*

The early bas relief in India often reflected a *horror vacui*, and every part of the field was agitated by figures densely cramped together. In relation to this we should consider the Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī (figs. 17-20) and the lower register of Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3) which represent this earlier mode where there is a plentitude of forms crammed into sparse background space. In both there is a sense of the agitation inherent in the cluster of forms, concentrated energy being discharged out of sheer crowding and shifting semblances resulting from the diversifications of grouping and partial apprehension of this crowding and cluster.

The figures in the Marriage tryptich stand vertically, are more or less of the same size, even though not all are carved in their entirety. In the two side panels, figures veer from frontality. There is little empty space, except between the heads, and we get the impression of bustle and crowding, though each figure maintains its privately individual elegance. The absence of negative space results in a comingling of the figures, so that the group seems not to be stationary. We have to examine them in succession, and they are not stabile.

As we saw above in IV, in the *gaṇas* sporting with Nandī, lower register of Śiva and Pārvatī Playing at Chausar panel (fig. 25), there is so little empty space that we see the mass of Nandī's form surrounded by numerous more or less equally sized figures who are in different positions, all flatly carved and overlapping each other with no space between them. The panel is consequently crowded and teeming with life.

In the upper register of this panel (fig. 3), eleven figures are vertically positioned one next to the other. While Śiva is larger than the other, and while they do differ in size and three dimensionality, the effect is more of a crowded group within a horizontal rectangle than of individually separate figures, except where the negative space is used to separate Pārvatī's entourage from Śiva's so that two groups of figures can be isolated, with the attendant who is between them and the flag separating the two groups.

In the Rāvaṇa (fig. 5) panel, two moderately sized figures, Śiva and Pārvatī on the top register and one, Rāvaṇa, is beneath. A facsimile of the Himalaya mountain is the rectangular form that acts as a divider between the lower register and the upper one. There is a balance of two and three figures on each side of Śiva and Pārvatī with *vidyādharas*. A small amount of space surrounds each figure. Rāvaṇa's is given a background of space so that it is isolated, the mass emerging as a unit.

On the west, in the panels of Kārtikeya (fig. 21) and Kāla (fig. 9), the concept has changed completely. The individual figures are positioned and isolated in space; each has its own place and identity and a good amount of space around it. This is a very early example of a technique that will be adopted later for use in the panels in cave 15.

The *mātrikās* (fig. 7) obey their own set of rules. Some are surrounded by enormous halos, and each is separated from the other by an ample amount of space so that it is not possible to see the whole group at one. Because of their horizontal placement within a very narrow chamber, they are seen one by one, but at the same time they also maintain their connecting links as a group. Their seat, a single cross bar of equal proportion, the equality in their size, dimension and style, and the complexities of forms of arms that act as bridge from one to the other cause a great deal of ambiguity. They are neither totally single figures, nor a solid group; they are both isolated and at the same time combined, and the viewer is left with a tantalizing inability to settle on one reaction or another.

But in Cave 14, the *mātrikās* are cramped together, and there is not the elegant and outlined isolation of figures with so much surrounding space (fig. 8).

VI. *Light*

Some of the best carvings in India are hidden from the light much of the time so that visual access is often difficult to attain. Hidden in the shadowy parts of the caves images await illumination. Like the dark recesses of the inner life of man, the most profound is the hardest to reach. When the light does come, it is not fixed, but shimmering, moving in with power and strength, illuminating and then fading away, but only for a measured amount of time. Thus the cycle continues, and the passing of the light signifies an inversion into only temporary darkness.

While most Hindu temples face the east, the natural contours of the Ellora rock face dictate that they should face the west here. And therefore it is in the afternoon that the cave wakes to the sun, and the images then achieve renewal in their contact with the light.

The sun sets in the southwest in the winter and moves north as the summer and monsoon months unfold. In each day of the year, therefore, there is a different relationship between the direct sunlight and the panel on which it shines. Direct light of the sun floods the Śiva Dancing in Chatura (fig. 13) and part of the Durgā panel (fig. 11) as well as the environment of the shrine (fig. 2) at certain times in the year. Rāvaṇa (fig. 5), and Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3) are also in the path of the sun's direct rays. The other panels, Mātrikās (fig. 7), Kāla (fig. 9), Marriage (figs. 17-20) and Kārtikeya (fig. 21) are lit only by reflected light which falls on the floors. Shadows are less harsh, transitions more subtle. The statues are never seen in the same light, to use the phrase literally, therefore what is observed by the viewer is always a shifting and changing emphasis.

VII. *Proportion and Measure*

Each panel is an individual work of art; the artists seemed to have a great deal of freedom of expression. Yet in Cave 21, they were obviously following canons of proportion quite strictly because, although the individual stamp is evident, still there is consistency of measurement throughout the cave which reflects the architect's rigid adherence to prescribed rules of proportion. This is true of all the measurements.

Different but appropriate rules for the carving of the subsidiary figures, the capitals of the columns, the doorframe decoration and the *gaṇas* etc. are followed.

The unit of measurement was the *tāla*, which consisted of twelve *aṅgulas*, an *aṅgula* being the size of the middle digit of the artist, architect or patron.[10]

The *Matsya Purāṇa* for example, lists the following proportions :

12 *aṅgulas*	distance from chin to top of forehead
28 *aṅgulas*	chin to navel
60 *aṅgulas*	navel to the floor
4 *aṅgulas*	knee caps
2 *aṅgulas*	ankle to the floor

The result is one head to eight parts. If we include another 12 *aṅgulas* for the headdresses, we arrive at the *Uttama Navatāla* or 108 *aṅgula* system. Images made according to these measurements were very popular.[11]

The Durgā (fig. 11), Śiva Dancing in Chatura (fig. 15), the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 3) and Rāvaṇa panels (fig. 5) all seem to adhere to the proportions of the *Uttama Navatāla*. The *chowribearer* (fig. 33), the *dvārapālas* (fig. 15), and Kārtikeya are stockier. Their proportions measure one head to seven parts.

As for the *mātrikās* (fig. 7), their measurements are disproportionate. So much attention is given to the voluminous and splendid headdresses that the bodies are neglected. The artist takes liberties with canons. Throwing measure to the wind, he gives reign to free expression.

In Cave 14 we do not notice this same continuity of proportion or measure, but rather, a deterioration of workmanship. There is an apparent neglect of the *sūtras*, either out of carelessness, disregard for aesthetics or vulgarization of patronage.

While the Gaja Lakshmī, Vishnu with Śrī and Lakshmī, the Varāha, the Rāvaṇa (fig. 6) and even the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar (fig. 4) still have good proportionate relationship of head and torso, they fall short of adequacy from the waist down. This imparts a stumpy, neglected appearance, as if the artist did not preplan in order to leave the proper amount of room for the bottom portion.

---

[10] T. A. Gopinath Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I., Part II, Reprint, 1971, Appendix B., p. 2.

[11] Tarapada Bhattacharyya, *The Canons of Indian Art*, Calcutta, second edition, 1963.

Space does not allow us here to show this decline in detail, but an interesting comparison can be made between, for example, the two Chausar panels (fig. 3, 4) and the two Rāvaṇa panels (fig. 5, 6).

VIII. *Scale*

In the two large panels of Cave 21, little accent is placed on the size of the protagonists, which is quite moderate, and all the figures are more or less equal in size. The other four panels are small. Each has one centralized figure which covers the vertical length of the panel. But the breadth differs according to subject. Durgā's (fig. 11) is a solid and stocky figure occupying most of the space of the panel, while Kāla (fig. 9) is long, emaciated and separated by some amount of space from the accompanying figures. In each of these panels, the main character is largest, with smaller figures being less important to the narrative. Figures tend to group themselvs into three sizes, the dancer himself occupies the full height of the panel, the accompanying musicians and Pārvatī's entourage (fig. 31) fall into a second size group, and the figures at either corner at the top are smallest.

In terms of scale, the peculiar characteristic of the *mātrikās* (fig. 7) is the emphasis placed on the size of the headdresses and heads, while the torsos are underemphasized, though shapely.

On the other hand, different principles of proportion govern the oversize Gaṅgā, Yamunā and *dvārapālas* (fig. 15). Their towering shapes emphasize their function as protectors. It is always a renewed shock to encounter the majestic shrine with its steps leading to the *liṅga* and the large *dvārapālas*. Everything else in the cave is dwarfed. To go up the stairs and move into the shrine is to experience transformation, where the ego is in the process of disintegration. The magnificent size of the protectors helps in this process, since a person always feels smaller in relation to the magnitude of the stones. In the *dvārapālas* a duality of temporal solidity, mass and size and languid other worldliness are combined. Many such *dvārapālas* adorn the shrines of Ellora, but these achieve grandeur.

The Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī (figs. 17-20) is a cross between bas relief and panel. Here many aspects of the narrative are depicted. The figures are diminutive and closely packed. There is a plentitude of forms which are crammed together, concentrated, compact, in shallow relief.

Another aspect is that the size may change depending on the emphasis the artist desires. In the Marriage panel, where Brahmā blesses Śiva and Pārvatī, Śiva has grown enormous, his seated figure is as large up to his thighs as Pārvatī's complete form. He has been magnified in size relative to his other forms in the adjacent panels. Brahmā and Pārvatī, the other two protagonists, are also shown transformed in scale in the different panels. Exaggerated scale boldly proclaims the erotic power connected with Kārtikeya's peacock (fig. 21). Height along with a skeletal appearance very convincingly reminds of Kāla's influence and superiority (fig. 9).

In Cave 14, the panels are larger, and thus when the figure is accented in the centre, as in the two Durgās (fig. 12), the Varāha, Andhakāsura (fig. 36) and Śiva Dancing in Lalita (fig. 14), the sculptor works with a larger hand. This tendency will continue as the size of the figures is augmented in the next centuries.

The *Sapta Mātrikās* (fig. 8) seat is placed on a higher level, they are taller. These changes seem to accompany the growth in the floor dimensions in Cave 14.

IX. *Mobility and Energy*

In Cave 21, surprisingly little stress is put on figures in action, while great importance is given to figures in quiet, though animated repose. Sculpture of this period is in general characterized by stances of quietude, moderation, lyricism, but also austerity.

We have to distinguish between those panels which depict the actual instant of action and those that portray figures either at rest or involved in a stabile situation.

The former condition is true of Śiva, held at one instant of the dance (fig. 15). Though all parts of the body are carved along the diagonals, they deviate little from the *madhya sūtra* except where limbs, the left thigh and calf, for example, are positioned at oblique angles relative to the vertical axis. The torso and head are also kept surprisingly close to the plumb line; together their balance stabilizes the agitated limbs. The result is a dancing figure in gentle motion. There is no trace here of the tumoult or frenzy involved in the concept which includes the idea of destruction as well as creation. Śiva is a light footed, exquisite and comely youth, the possessor of Apollonian qualities—urbanity, grace, charm, beauty. It is a conception of Śiva which eliminates the negative side of his nature.

He carries what is probably the most gorgeously wrought hair arrangement ever carved (fig. 30) with rope shaped forms depicting *jaṭās* or falling coils of hair, arranged in wavy linear curved patterns; these indicate that he is in motion. Tresses are swept along gently.

The bent lower right arm of the male attendant acts as a central pivot around which the four heads seem to rotate, though the three female heads can also be conceived of as in a semi-circular movement. Devices such as this animate the panel while still keeping the movements localized to the particular group.

Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī (fig. 11) is the second panel to depict a moment of action, though there is emphasis on her solidity and power and her involvement with the buffalo, rather than on the activity during a critical moment in the battle.

The goddess is not really fighting. If we did not know the story and ignored the left hand on the buffalo's muzzle and the accompanying warriors, we might wonder about the relationship of the two. His upward gaze might easily indicate worship, and hers a protective motherliness or attraction. A switching tail, her right thigh extending forward, the buffalo's right legs and the head bent back are only very moderate signs of activity. We can detect that the relationship between the slayer and the slain is a more important concept than the details of battle. Even when the narrative calls for signs of contention, we perceive its opposite.

In actuality, the two figures are made to be like one, the buffalo's body and the goddess' skirt are combined into an abstract form, a beautiful and rare moment when the Indian sculptor was concentrating on the broad shape of the stone in the same way that the contemporary sculptor does.

At this early stage in the development of the Hindu panels, the depiction of heightened action was not as important as it would later become. It was not until the time of the construction of Cave 15, that figures in motion became the dominating impulse of the artist.

None of the *mātrikās* in Cave 21 (fig. 7) has a static appearance. Kaumārī and Varāhī have their legs deviating from the vertical torso moving in contrasting directions and each *mātrikā* has her head turned slightly. The shoulders of Maheśvarī, Kaumārī and Varāhī are separated from the back wall, imparting a feeling of vitality to the group.

When numerous forms which resemble each other or have most of their elements in common are lined up consecutively in a row, the very act of trying to read these repeated accents forces the viewer to conceive of their sequential rhythmic relationships as being in an active state.

The *mātrikās* are arranged in a series with the two additional figures of Vīrabhadra and Gaṇapati flanking them on either side. As we try to see the whole group at once, we must move from one figure to the other, stopping along each way to study the intervening parts—the arms and what they hold. The very act of this examination keeps the group active, as motion is suggested.

The arms of Rāvaṇa are also shown in sequence (fig. 41). They do not have intervening details to complicate the situation, but the very juxtaposition of like elements stirs the inner rhythms of the viewer like the beat of a drum. Such alignments sooth and calm the spirit with melodious repetitions of symmetrical forms.

At Badami in Cave 1 and here in Cave 14, with greater emphasis, the torso of Śiva Dancing in Lalita (fig. 14) is in oblique relation to the *madhya sūtra*. The head here and in Badami is kept perfectly erect, and the legs in all three (including the dancer in Cave 21) are equally angled, more or less. More complex arm arrangements also agitate the field and change the spirit from one of gentle movement in Cave 21 to a dance of restrained frenzy.

In the *gaṇas* sporting with Nandī (fig. 26), exuberant activity is taking place around a quiet mass, the body of the bull. Surrounding him we see figures caught in the instant of action. Playful *gaṇas* show backwards, wrestling, resting against Nandī's body, one even is upside down, one bites his tail, one has jumped up above the head and is seen in mid-air, one makes a funny face, another shows his rear end. all frolicking joyfully; in their midst, Nandī stands emanating energy from a central source.

All the *gaṇas* (fig. 42) lined in a row under the Marriage panel sport and play, and each has a different, though upright stance. The legs show figures in action, bodies move and heads turn, a few are shown in semi-profile. Reading them serially, animation is felt.

X. *Surface, Contour, Transitions*

A very strict puritanism is one aspect of the grandeur of Cave 21. During this period at Deogarh, Nalanda, Sarnath, in the Parel Śiva, in fifth and sixth century work at Mathura, etc., this was the dominant style. Its distinguishing mark is an appreciation of the essence of organic form. The surface of the volumes is a smooth field, and there is little differentiation to indicate natural anatomical changes or flesh and muscles. Planes on the body are understated. Surfaces are plain, broad and basically austere and forms of the panel figures are modestly convex. Cubist tendencies, where the two sides are distinguishable as separate and definite planes are held to a minimum. The figure therefore retains its essential flatness. This is true for the panel.

There are a few startling variations in other parts of the cave, as in the case of the spherical breasts of the *mātrikās* (fig. 7) or in contrast, the concavity in the skirts of the Rāvaṇa Pārvatī (fig. 5) and Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī (fig. 11). More pronounced rotundities are reserved for the *mātrikā* headdresses and the more amply portrayed figures of *śālābhañjikās* and river deities.

Clear cut, continuos and uninterrupted, the outlines perform the function of containing the volumes within a strict and ordered boundary. The figure is compactly separated from the space around it. Forms are isolated and made distinct as separate entities because these mildly curved, continuously flowing lines are firm and binding.

Whenever there is an angle, at elbow or shoulder, it is always modified, its harshness tempered as it is made to be round.

XI. *The Treatment of the Ornamented Areas*

Meticulously carved and richly ornamented adornment, a profusion of splendidly flowing and very clearly cut decorative forms is in direct contrast to the plain masses of the volumes.

Juxtaposed antithetically to the distinctly simple volumes are the magnificent headdresses, patterned gardens of diversified form, multifaceted, flowing, linear, neatly contained.

The dancer's *jaṭās* (fig. 30) are rope like uniform strands, arranged in curving patterns with intervening deeply incised lines. His tresses have been elaborated so that they fall in curving patterns from the top of the head to the shoulder in a sensuous but disciplined fashion. The jewelled diadem is placed neatly above the forehead. But the complicated composition is a single unit as well; the various details fall into a very tidy whole. The headdress of the musician, seated to the right of the dancer, in the corner, has the *jaṭās* arranged on a vertical-horizontal axis. These *jaṭāmakuṭas* are inherited from a past in Gandhara, and they are seen in early sculpture at Udayagiri, Deogarh, Mandasor, etc., but their culminating moment of glory is achieved here.

In the *mātrikās* (fig. 7), deftness of hand and great skill can be observed in the ordered headdresses of all, as well as Vīrabhadra's and each is a very particularized creative invention, a beautiful example of genuine artistic freedom. They are different from the dancer's headdresses, obeying different impulses. Small forms correspond and repeat themselves in ever changing combinations. The intricate details of the linear surface organization as well as the underlying mass are strictly geometrical. As opposed to the dancer's lightly jumbled mass of *jaṭās*, the bulbous shapes of heads and hair are sternly contained within the geometry of the cylindrical shapes (only Varāhī's is conical) as they protrude into the upper space in an attitude of splendid regality. With the exception of Chamuṇḍā, each of the *mātrikās*' individualized headdress is composed of horizontal, repetitive designs, like rosettes, jewels and globular circlets of hair, carved with great precision and attention to the clarity of statement.

Members of Pārvatī's entourage to the left of the dancer (fig. 31) bear noble headdresses of the same style, while the headdresses in the Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī (figs. 17-20) are also executed in the same style, with less complexity and a slight decrease in dexterity of hand.

The primary characteristic of the ornamentations in Cave 21, though there is some deviation from perfection even here (for example, the *mukuṭa* of Śiva and Pārvatī's hair of the Rāvaṇa panel) (fig. 32), is the clarity of articulation of form and outline. Each shape is expressed in all its unitary clarity, accurately defined by a nuanced chisel.

Also to be noted is the dancer's necklace (fig. 13), the belt, diadem and necklaces of the chowribearer (fig. 33) to the right of the Rāvaṇa panel (fig. 5), the ornament of Pārvatī in the Śiva and Pārvatī Playing at Chausar (fig. 31), the hair and headdress of the accompanying dwarf to the right of the south *dvārapāla*, the carvings around the *śālabhañjikās* (figs. 1, 34) and the exquisite work of the refined chisel on ornaments in the Marriage scenes (figs. 17-20). But this itemizing can do no justice to the cave. It must be seen.

Though we are primarily interested in the sculpture, it is worthwhile to make the observation that column ornamentation, while it is different in character and carved in very low relief with linear unfoldments, following patterns established at Ajanta, maintains the highest standards of excellence.

There is noticeable deterioration of quality in the surface ornamentation in Cave 14, with one very outstanding exception of the headdress of Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī (fig. 44), which, like that of the dancer in Cave 21 is an orchestration of rope like strands of hair flowing in abundance, although even here there is somewhat of a loss of clarity The rest of the ornamentation on the figures here suffers because there is a slackening of emphasis on the essential demarcation between the plain mass and the clear depiction of the ornament. The carving has become mechanical and standardized and merely suggestive. Form and ornament are often fused. An other exception is the nicely carved round knot at the side of the head in the Umāmaheśvara panel in a view from the east (fig. 35 .

Even at Elephanta, the standards had begun to deteriorate in this respect. While Ardhanārīśvara, Andhakāsura, the Pārvatīs in the Marriage and Chausar panels are notably complex and masterfully carved, and the two side heads of Sadāśiva are complex and still maintain clarity, the Tatpurusha *makuṭa*, while clear, is already somewhat rigid, and the *makutas* of Śiva Dancing in Lalita, Yogeśvara and Śiva in the Rāvaṇa panel show deterioration. Perhaps this is an item to add to those by which we date the caves. The very deterioration serves to show us how extraordinary was the genius of the artist in Cave 21, whose hand produced masterpieces.

XII. *Relationship of the Composition to the Frame; Multiple Views*

All the panels in Cave 21 are submissive to the domination of the frame. For example, in Śiva Dancing in Chatura (fig. 13), since groups are oriented towards the center, all eyes are on the dancer, there are no ambivalences, nothing moves out of the frame. Even in the figure of Rāvaṇa (fig. 41), whose radiating arms seem to lead outward, a counteracting frame of small vertical figures assures his place within the rectangle which is the boundary.

The position of the sculptures in Cave 21 relative to the viewer is more stabilized than those of Elephanta and Cave 15, Ellora. They are more related to the circumference and the *bindu* internally, less magnetized towards other forces outside of the frame.

These conditions hold true here in each of the cases and in Cave 14, but in some of the panels at Elephanta and definitely in Cave 15, the frame does not hold the elements. Some are magnetized by forces outside the frame.

XIII. *Time*

Most of the panels use a moment stopped forever in time to symbolize a magnitude of meanings. But in the Marriage panel the emphasis is put on telling the story in unfolding episodes. From the viewer's right, Pārvatī, in her tenderness (fig. 18), rescues a degenerate ascetic, breaking her vow not to touch a man while involved in *tapas*. In the second episode in the same compartment, the ascetic, Śiva, reveals himself to Pārvatī who is doing her penances (fig. 18) standing in the midst of the fire. To the viewer's left (fig. 20), then, Pārvatī having accomplished the desires of winning Śiva is blessed with Śiva, by Brahmā, who is shown seated with three heads. Finally, we are witness to the Marriage ceremony in the center (fig. 19). Thus four clearly differentiated time (and possibly place) sequences are shown, and two are within the same panel. As for the sporting *gaṇas* (fig. 42), they go about their frisky, jolly celebrations moving in sequenial time.

The drama in the cave is inclusive of sequences from birth to death. Śiva had created the *mātrikās* to help him to battle Andhaka, the demon, and they in turn play the role of mother.

Pārvatī does *tapas* to win Śiva; they marry, they live and play together on the heights of the Himalayas, and he fights demons. Pārvatī is mother to Kārtikeya, she is one aspect of the great goddess, seen here in her other aspect as Slayer of the Buffalo Demon. Śiva is Dancer. The *śālābhañjikās* and *dvārapālas* and *chowribearers* stand silently witnessing these *līlās*, Śiva's life manifestations. But lurking in the darkest corner of the cave, difficult of contact but always there, is the figure of death, Kāla, in his shadowy presence. His retinue includes a childish *vidyādhara* (fig. 45), cherub of joy and youth who is aware of the final annihilation but aware also of the role of the dancer and *mātrikās* who recreate a world after the holocaust of fire and water. The message remains with the worshipper after he leaves, that the cycle is ever renewed. Through his identification with Śiva's life processes he has contacted himself and achieved *rasa* and the realization of the cyclical continuities which he tends to forget about when he is in the temporal world in anxiety because he understands his own mortality.

XIV. *Stylistic Techniques to Depict the Absurd*

All is not transcendental. Some aspects of the cave's sculpture are designed to remind the worshipper of the follies of the human condition in order to prepare him for his transformation onto a spiritual plane which is beyond the absurd or the illusory world. The *gaṇas* are the vehicles for buffoonery; they are shown either as clown, jester, or in playful attitudes of competitiveness. They thumb their noses at life. To accent this role, the *gaṇa* is made with legs deviating from the *madhya sūtra* or the body is slanted on the diagonal to suggest motion, heads turn in various directions. The *gaṇas* kneel, cavort and skip. Whereas the figures in the Marriage (figs. 14,17) scene are in hierarchic stance, with head, neck and torso aligned along the same axis, the *gaṇas* (fig. 46) below them are shown each as an individual. They form a line of frisky capering figures, bouncing restlessly. While the wedding figures are languid, engrossed in the miasmic dream, these small lusty creatures invade to challenge sacrosanctity. The contrast is deliberate and very obvious.

Śiva has grace and charm, but his host of *gaṇas* represent his other attributes which include extremes of behavior. While in the upper register outlines of figures are vertical, the *gaṇas* below have rounded curved outlines, and their bodies are nicely modelled, though flat. The same may be said of the contrast between the agitated surfaces of the *gaṇas* with Nandī in contrast to the verticality of Śiva and Pārvatī.

XV. *Rasas*

Entry into the cave might be compared to the entry into a theatre to witness a drama. According to Indian aesthetics as found in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, some nine mental states which are inherent in the human psyche, projected into the work of art are experienced by the spectator as an emotional apprehension on a plane separated from his own particular reality. He enters the mythic reality and identifies with it; he is released from individuality, and this gives a fundamental emotional experience, called *rasa* (juice, elemental fluid). The following are the mental states : Erotic, Comic, Pathetic, Furious, Heroic, Terrible, Repugnant, Marvelous, Serene.

All these states are reflected in Cave 21 in the variations of the moods depicted. For example mothers are portrayed as erotic, marvelous, serene, but a part of their nature is destructive : Brāhmaṇī represents pride, Maheśvarī, anger, Kaumārī, illusion, Vaishnavī, covetousness, Varāhī, envy, Indrāṇī, fault finding and Chamuṇḍā, tale bearing. These represent aspects of the negative primary mental states.

The *gaṇas* are comic, Pārvatī's tenderness toward the ascetic implies pathos, Durgā and the implications of the *mātrikās* and the dancer are terrible, Kārtikeya is heroic, *śālābhañjikās* are marvelous and the whole is pervaded by serenity.

But we can only hint at this as it is not the place here to elaborate on the implications of the myths, but we are reminded that the ancient Indian was very much in touch with his myths and indeed, lived in a world of mythical realities. He understood the meanings at their various levels. He was able to respond to what today for many people remain only mostly many silent symbols, awaiting a reawakening. When efforts to recapture the myths, the connections with the past, one's inner mental states and their reflection in the symbol as it is presented in each particular situation in the cave are attempted the resulting integration may well stimulate a revival of delight in *rasa*.

XVI. *Tendencies Towards Naturalistic Portrayals*

In the faces, for example, though in most cases there is little reference to particular human examples, there were some artists who did take note of the peculiar facial features of their subjects. They may not have had models, but we do detect in some of the faces, that of Nandikeśvara (fig. 31) in the Dancer's panel, for example, the expression that belongs to an individual.

The *gaṇas* who sport beneath the Marriage panel (fig. 42) have marked individuality and many of the faces are smiling or depicted with concrete expressions. The body and limb movements also convince that the artist was paying much attention to the natural movement of the body.

XVII. *The Innovations*

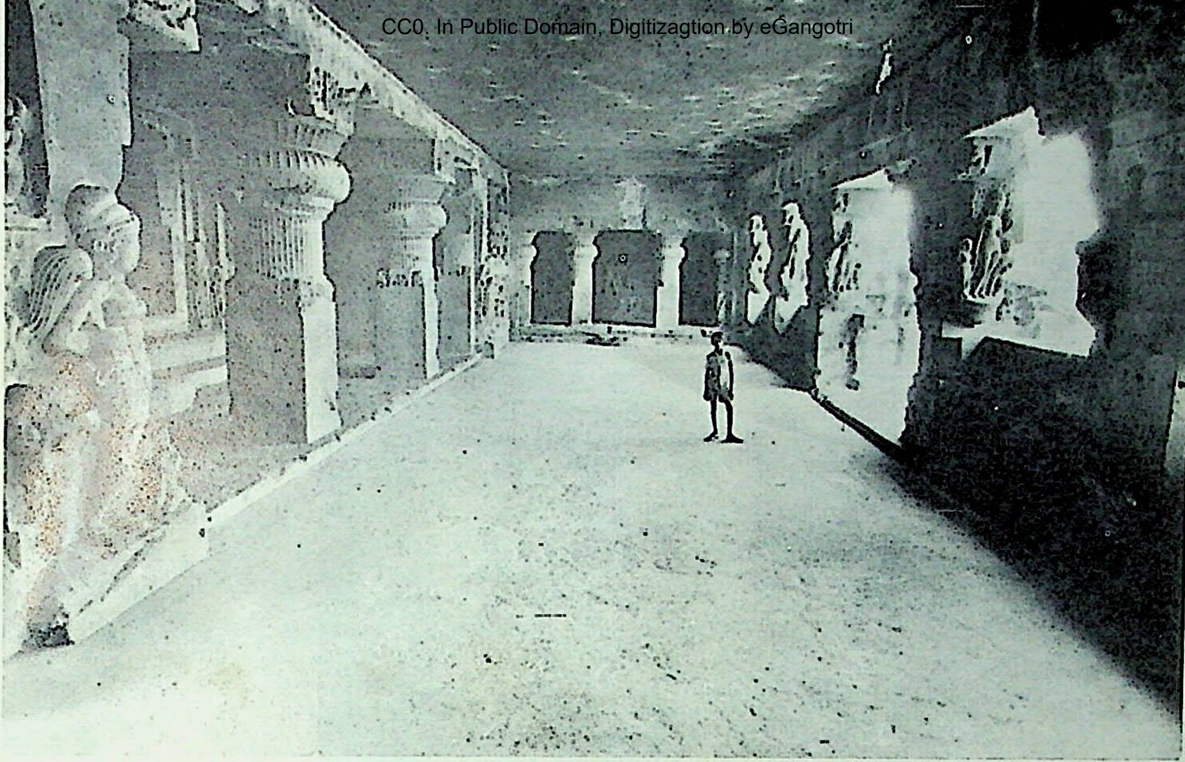
The environment which obviously encouraged free expression of the artist's invividuality sometimes produced stariling and unexpected innovations. Unknown sculptors experimented and created new arrangements of forms. Often the discovery seems to have gone unnoticed by later artists, and these intuitions were left in the stone as silent records of daring individuality which contemporary sculptors might do well to study. But at other times, a tradition was thus initiated, as these cognitions became part of the repertoire of subsequent workshops.

In Cave 21, for example, the babies sit on the lamp of the *mātrikās* (fig. 7). This is repeated in Cave 14, where a baby is also placed standing on the floor, the extended knee of the mother defining a space between the two. We do not encounter this in later sculpture.

The arrangement of the Marriage of Śiva Panel divided into three to form a tryptich within a shallow niche depicting episodic development of events was not repeated again, though there were variations.

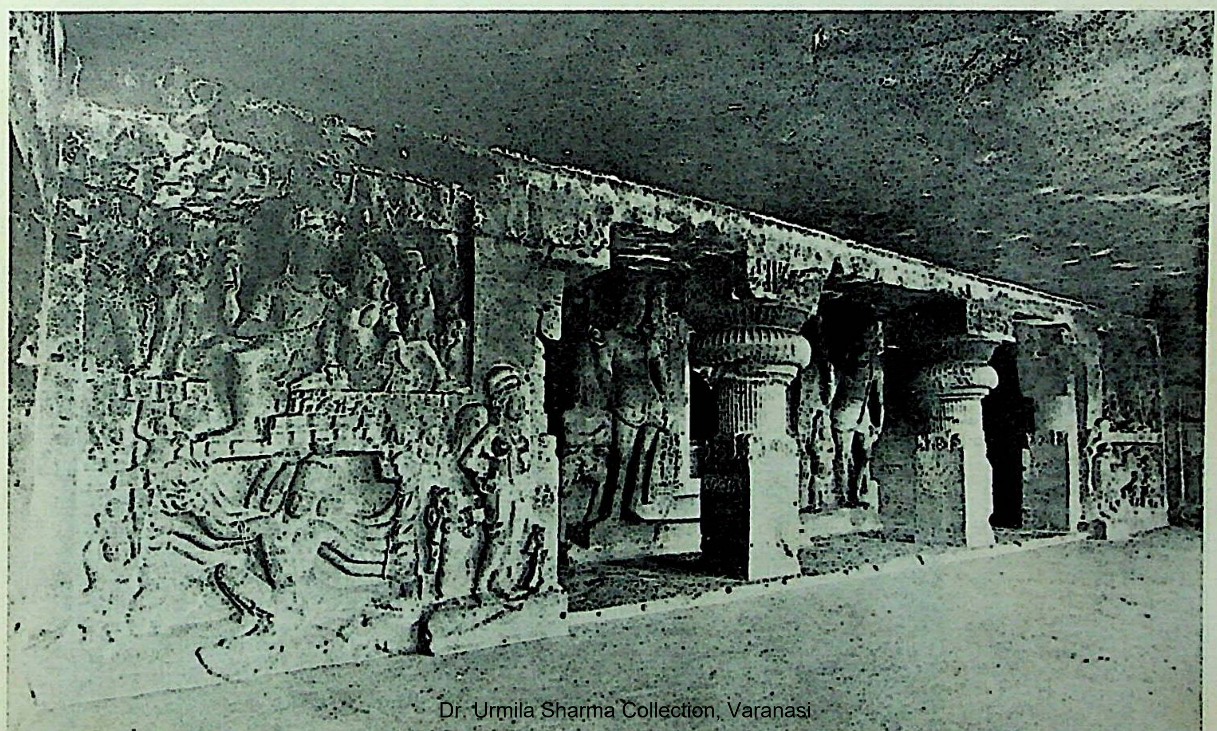
But for example, the use of negative space in the Kāla panel of Cave 21 (fig. 10) introduces an abrupt breach with a long past tradition the primary impulse of which had been to crowd the panel with volumes. Here a very limited amount of figures are the sole occupants of a panel where much of the ground is left uncarved. It was not until nearly two hundred years later that the Rashtrakuta artists understood and elaborated upon the implications of this style.

However, an examination of the independent elements must always coincide with an accompanying recognition of the underlying unity which was the ultimate intention of the artist. An analytical breakdown of the whole into parts is essentially only the vehicle by means of which we are more likely to gain an intuitive grasp of the interplay of forces which influence eachother and which are constantly interacting. Sequential and instantaneous cognitions are linked during the process of confrontation with the grand symphonic totality.

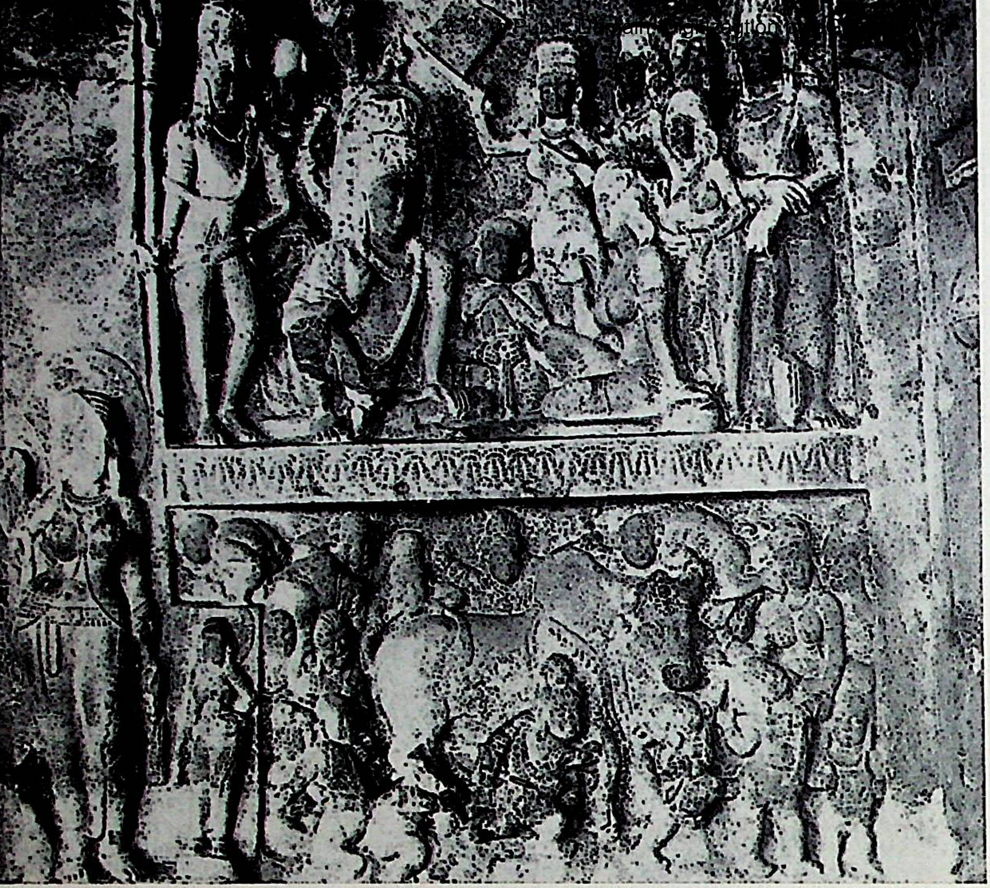


1. Cave 21 : *Maṇḍapa* (hall) facing south.

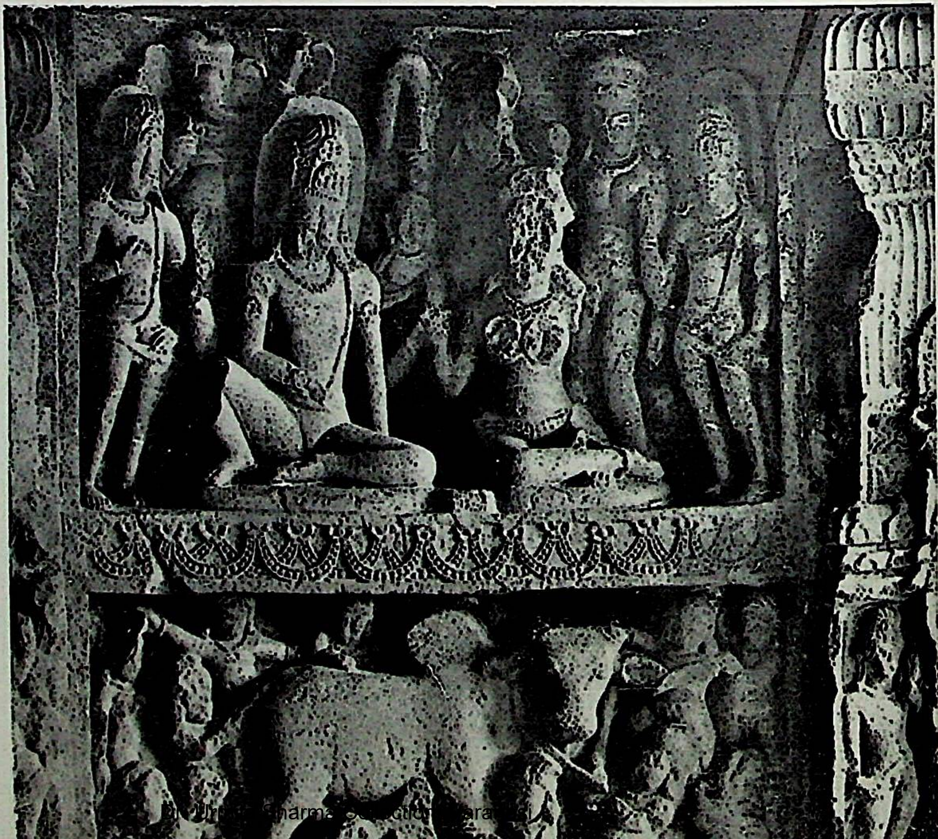
2. Cave 21 : *Antarāla* (vestibule) with *dvārapālas* (door guardians) flanking shrine door and Rāvaṇa shaking Mt. Kailāsa, panel, view from northwest corner of *maṇḍapa*.



CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eG



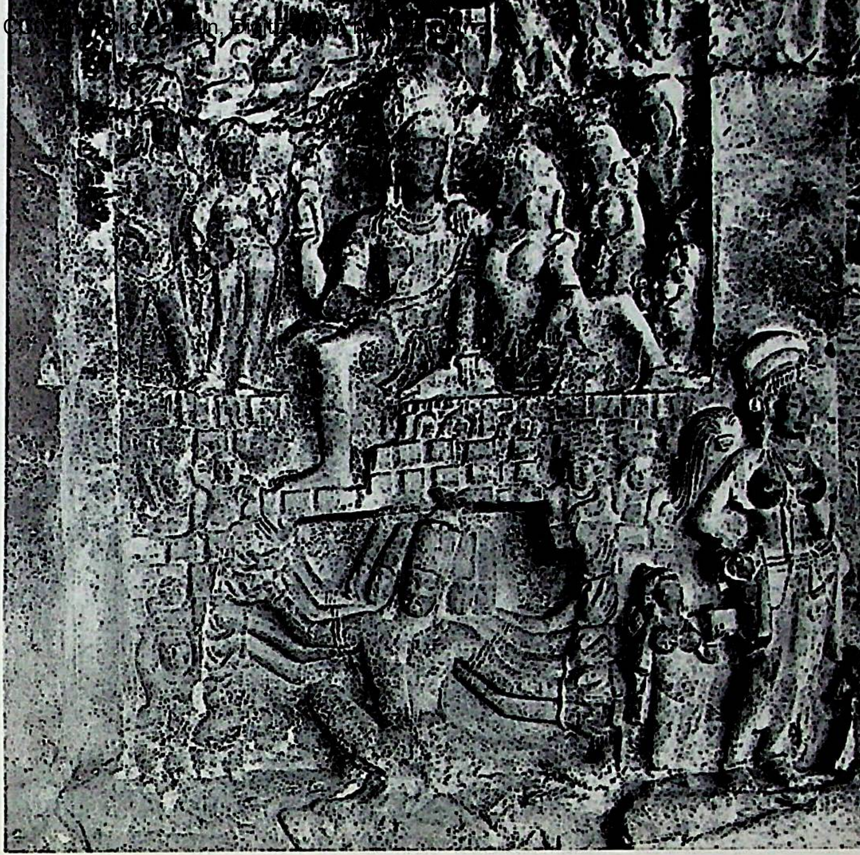
3. Cave 21 : Panel: Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar.

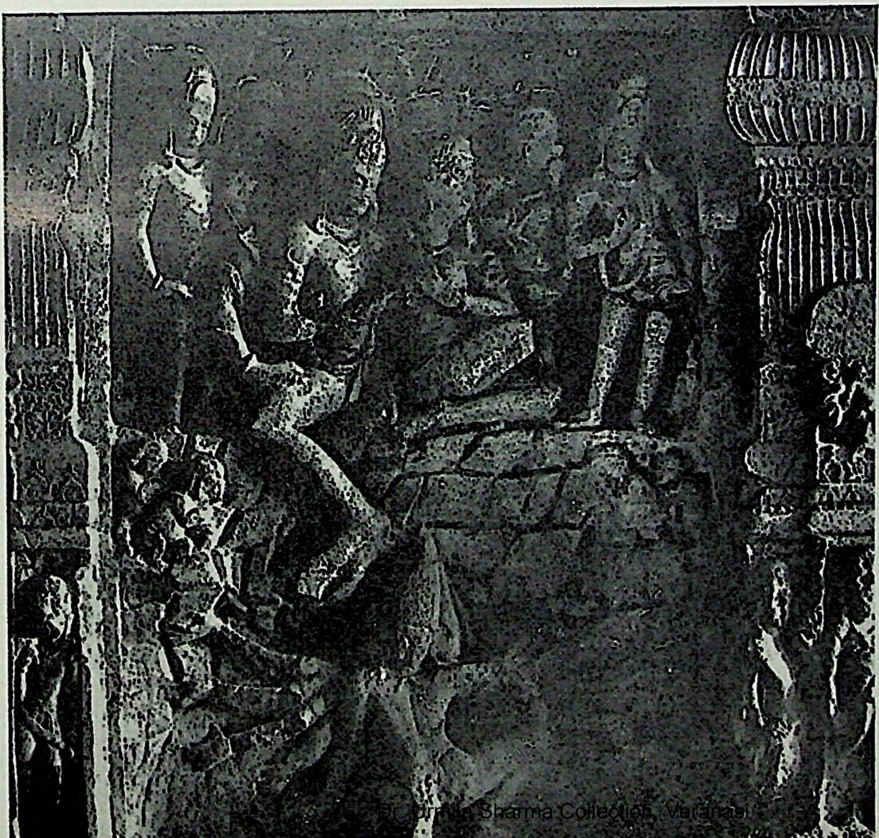


4. Cave 14 : Panel : Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar.

CC0. In Public Domain, Digitized by eGangotri

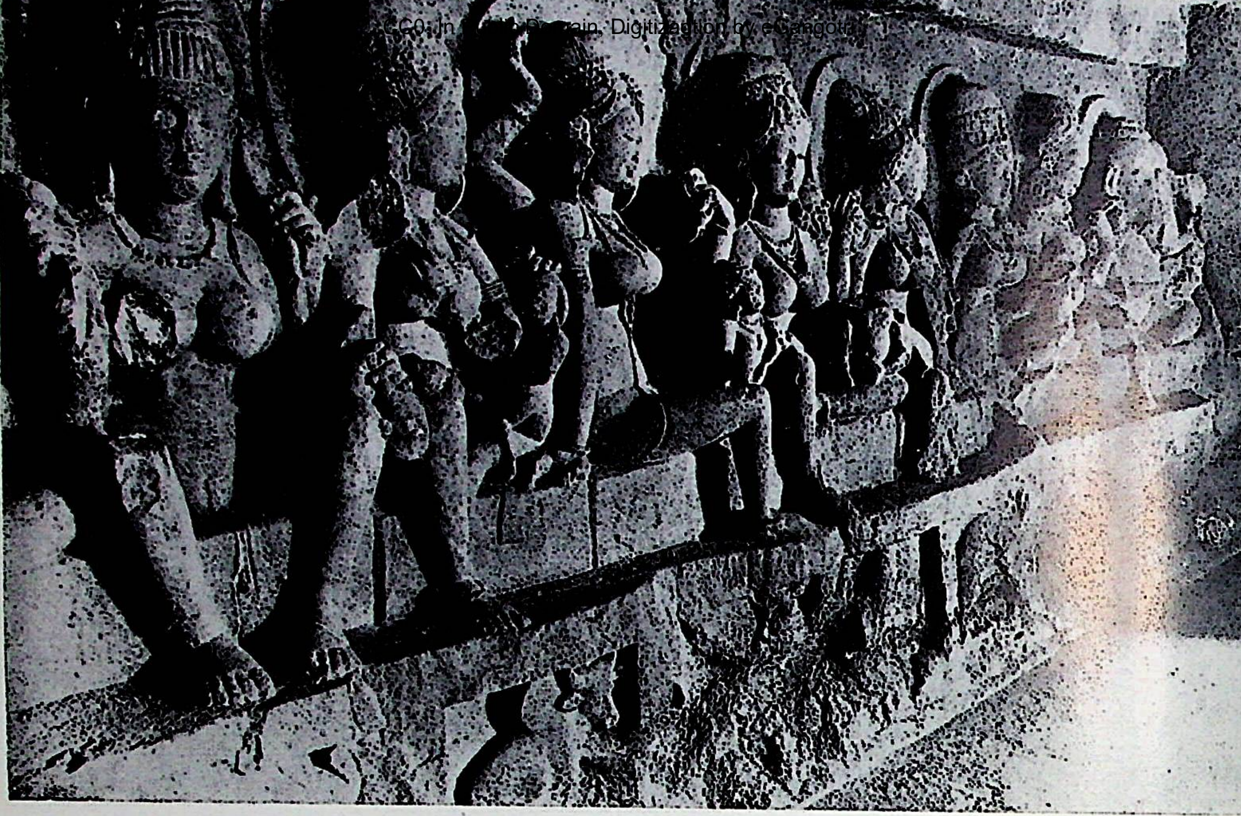
5. Cave 21 : Panel : Rāvaṇa Shaking Mt. Kailāsa.





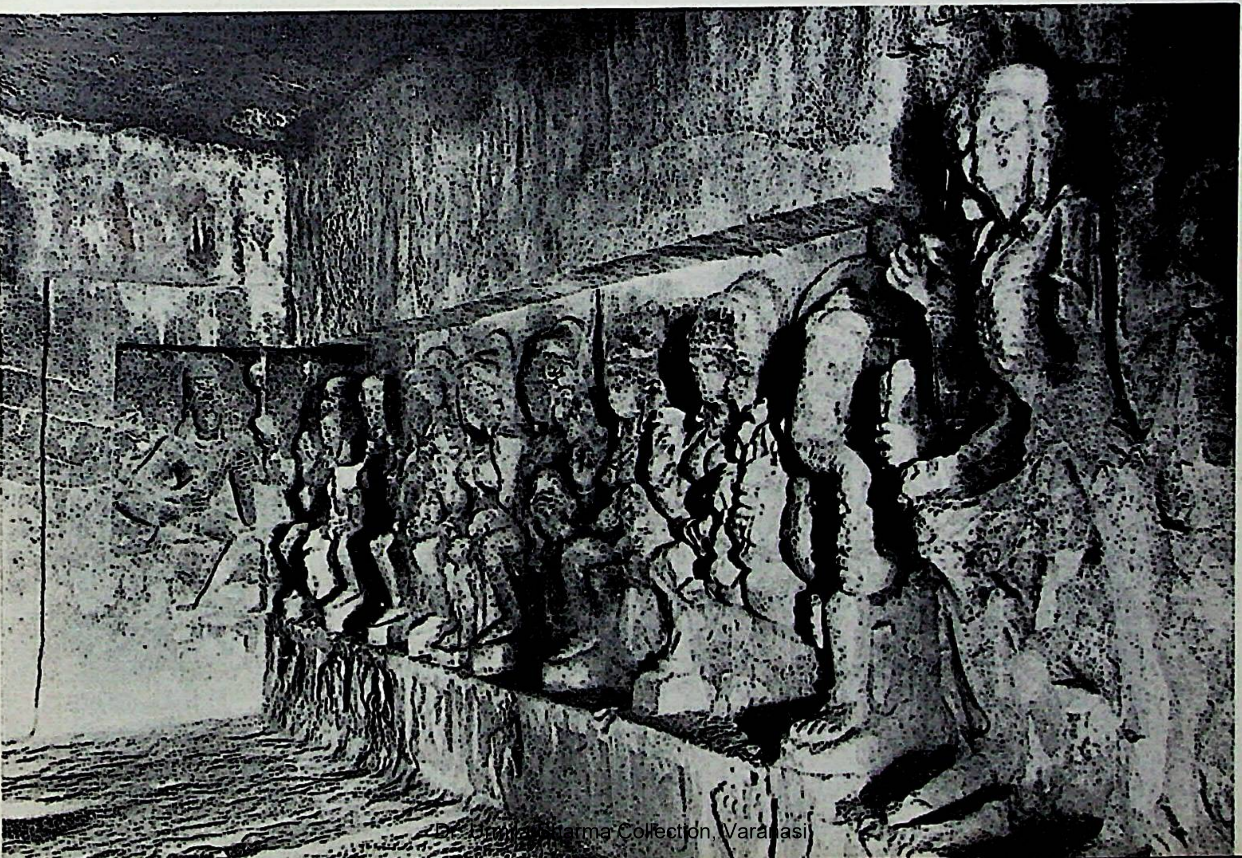
6. Cave 14 : Panel : Rāvaṇa Shaking Mt. Kailāsa.

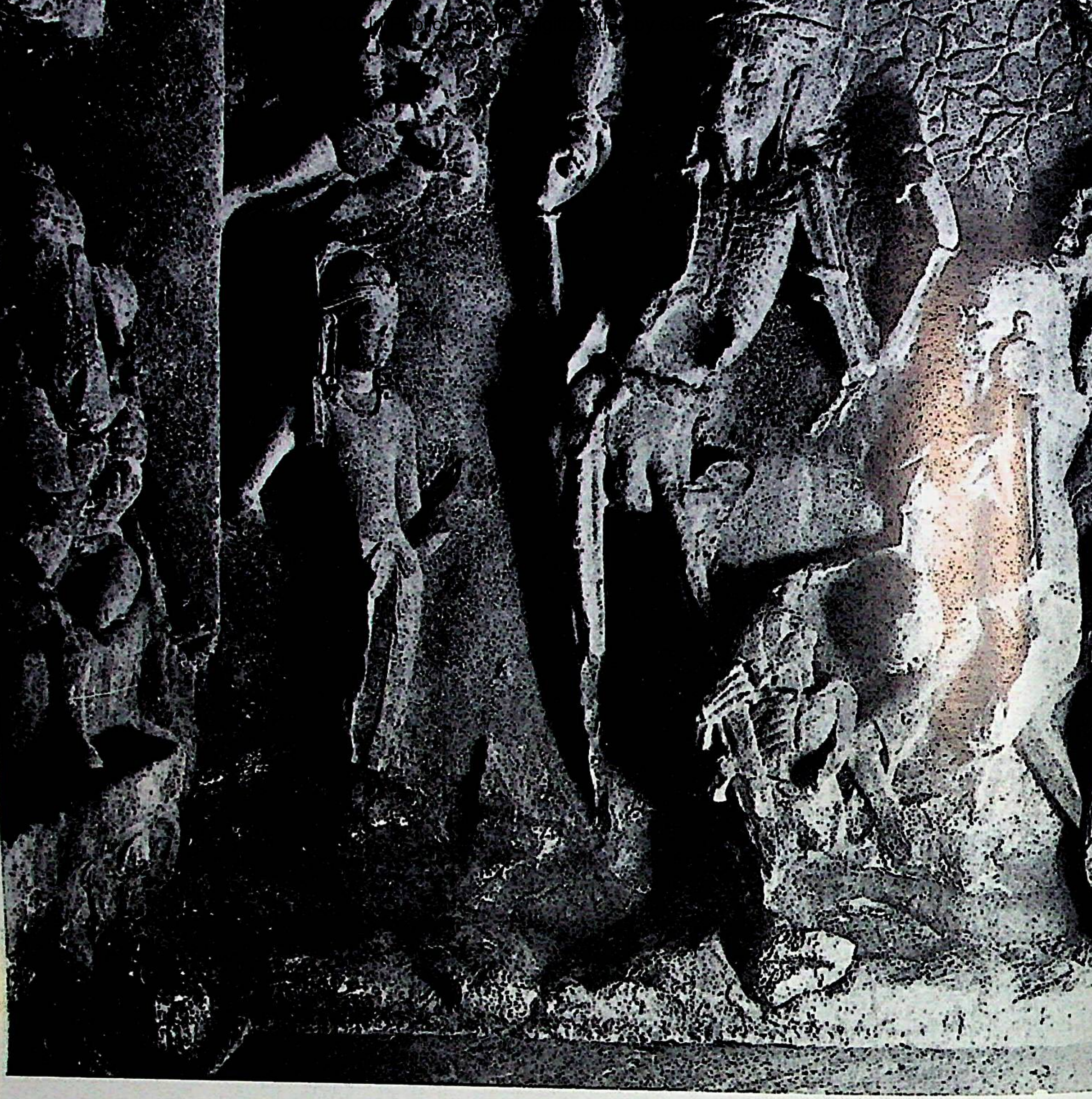
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri



7. Cave 21 : *Sapta Mōtrikā* (seven mothers) with Gaṇapati, south wall, south chamber.

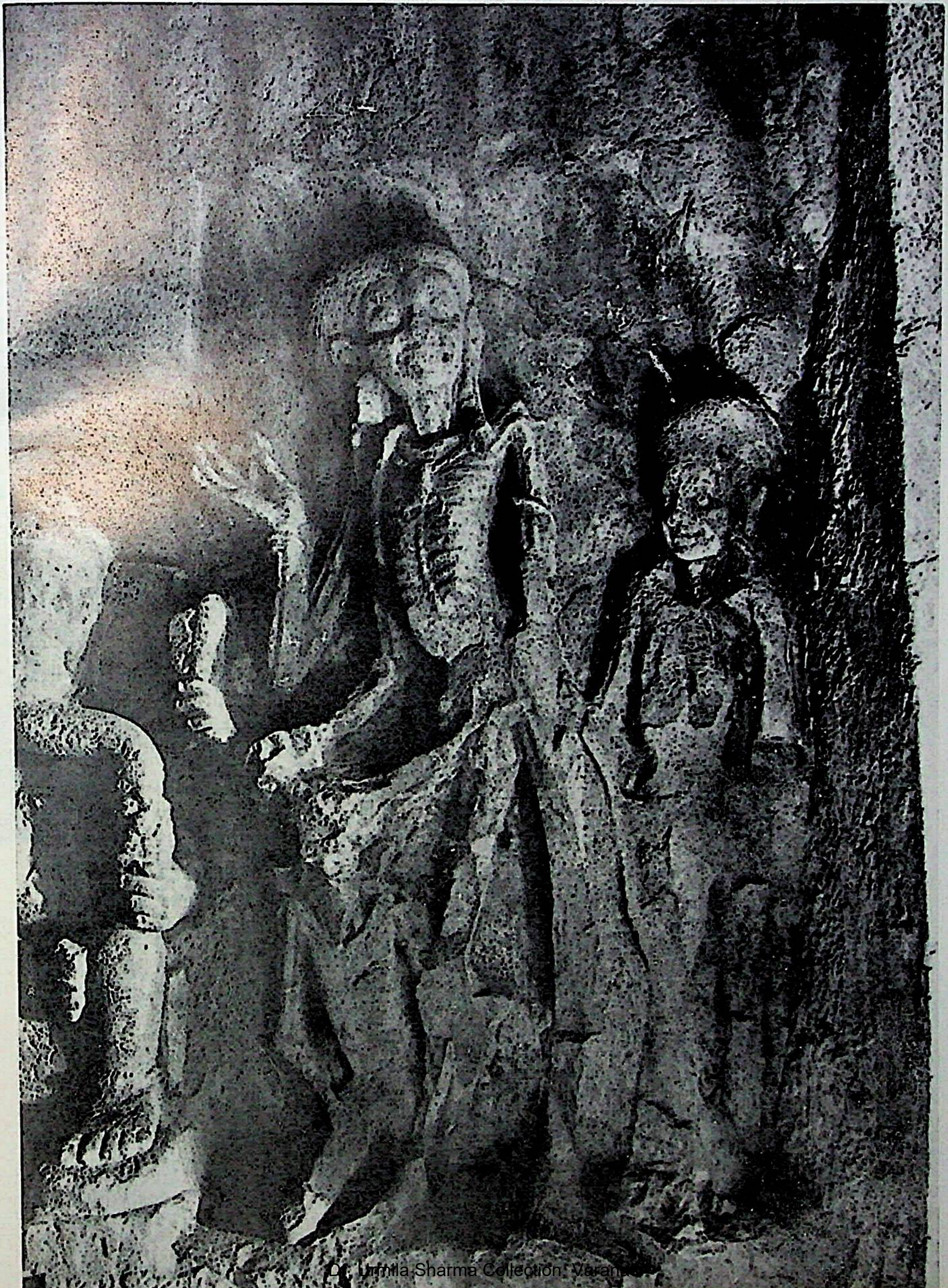
8. Cave 14 : *Sapta Mātrikās* (seven mothers) with Vīrabhadra, Gaṇapati and Kāla, south wall, east corner.



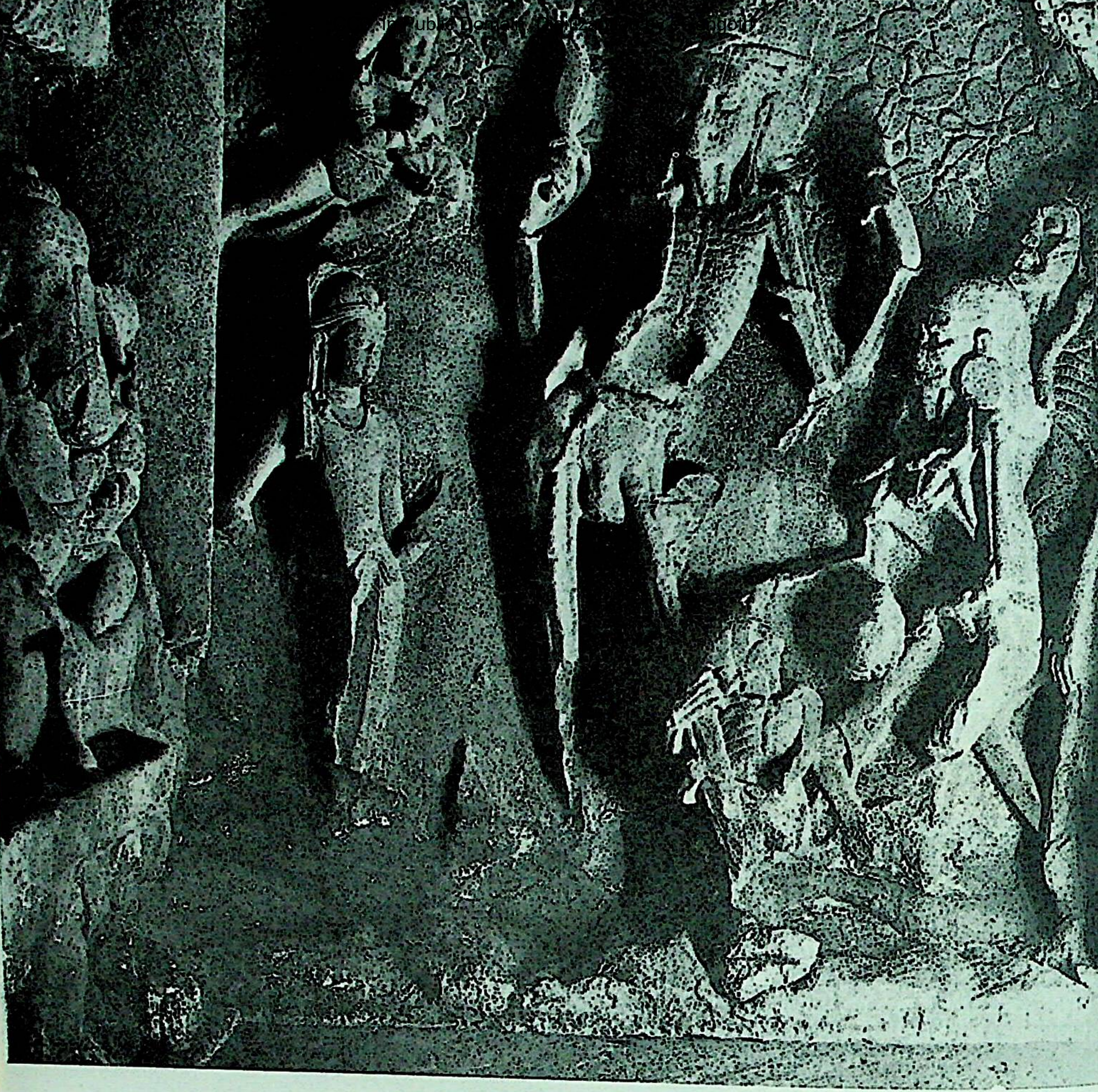


9. Cave 21 : Panel : Kāla (and Kālī ?) and attendants, west wall, south chamber.

10. Cave 14 : Kāla and Kālī, to the left of Gaṇapati, *Sapta Mātrikā*, south wall, east corner.

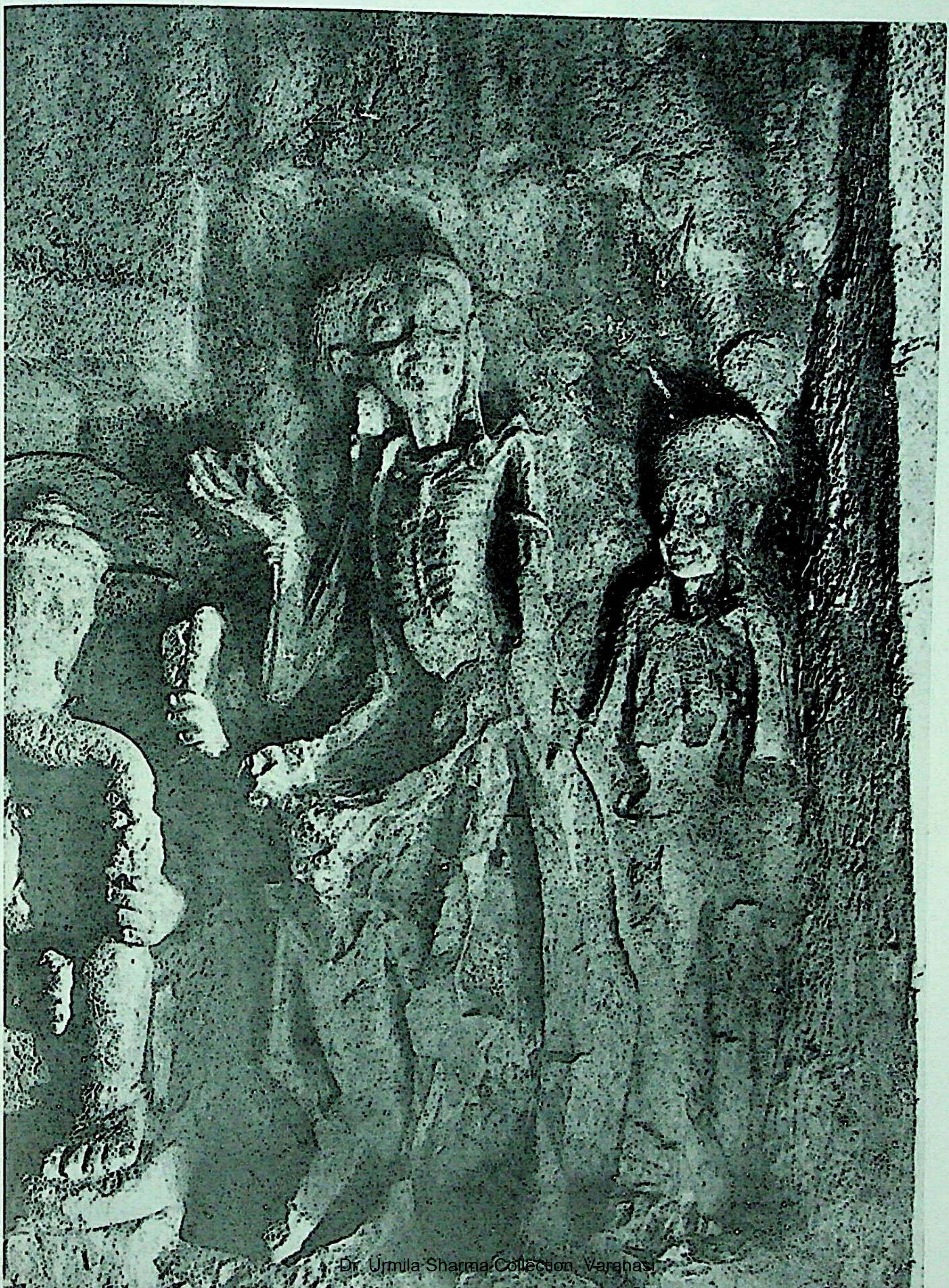


In Public Domain, Digitization by eGangotri

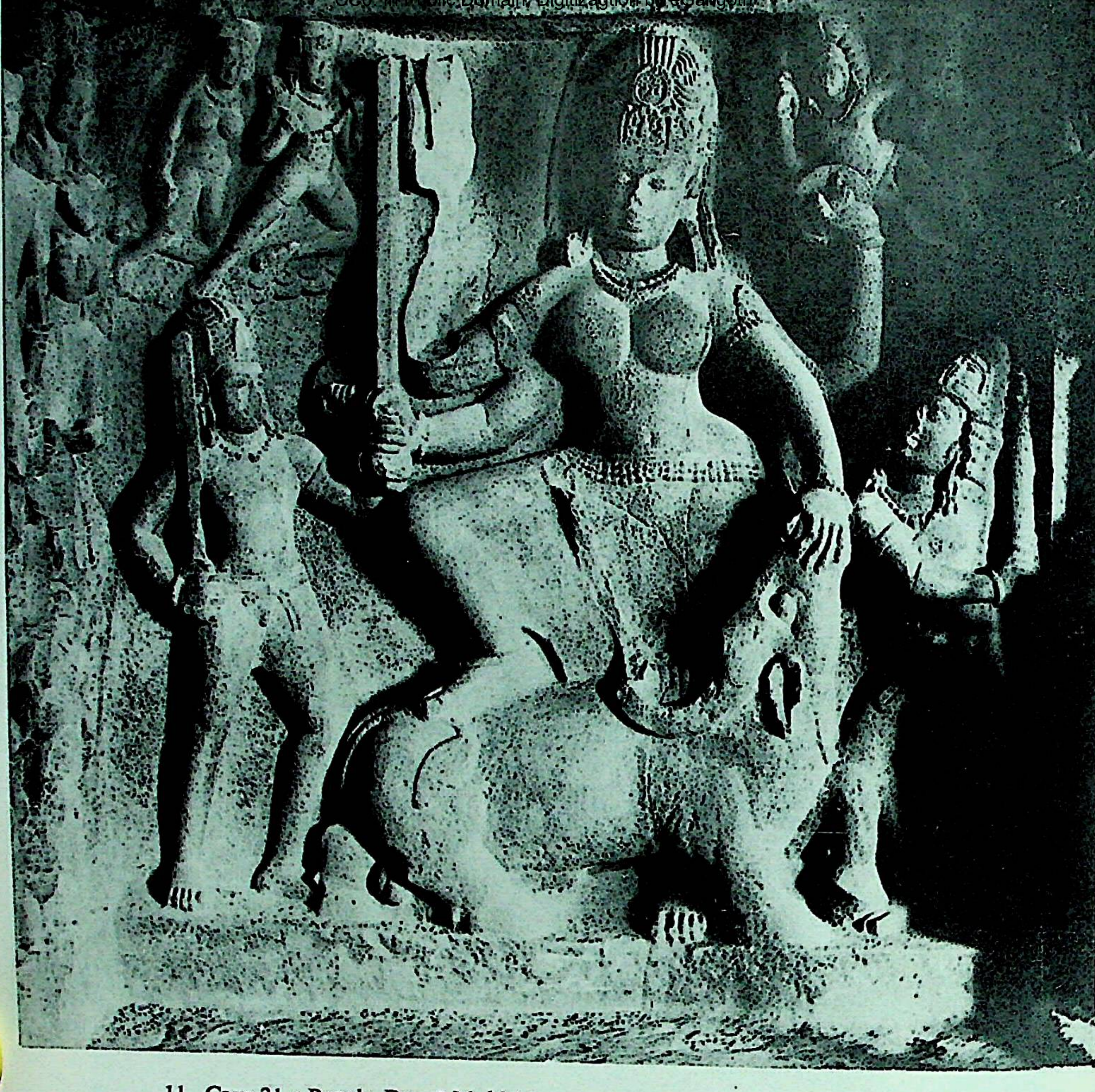


9. Cave 21 : Panel : Kāla (and Kālī ?) and attendants, west wall, south chamber.

10. Cave 14 : Kāla and Kālī, to the left of Gaṇapati, *Sapta Mātrikā*, south wall, east corner.

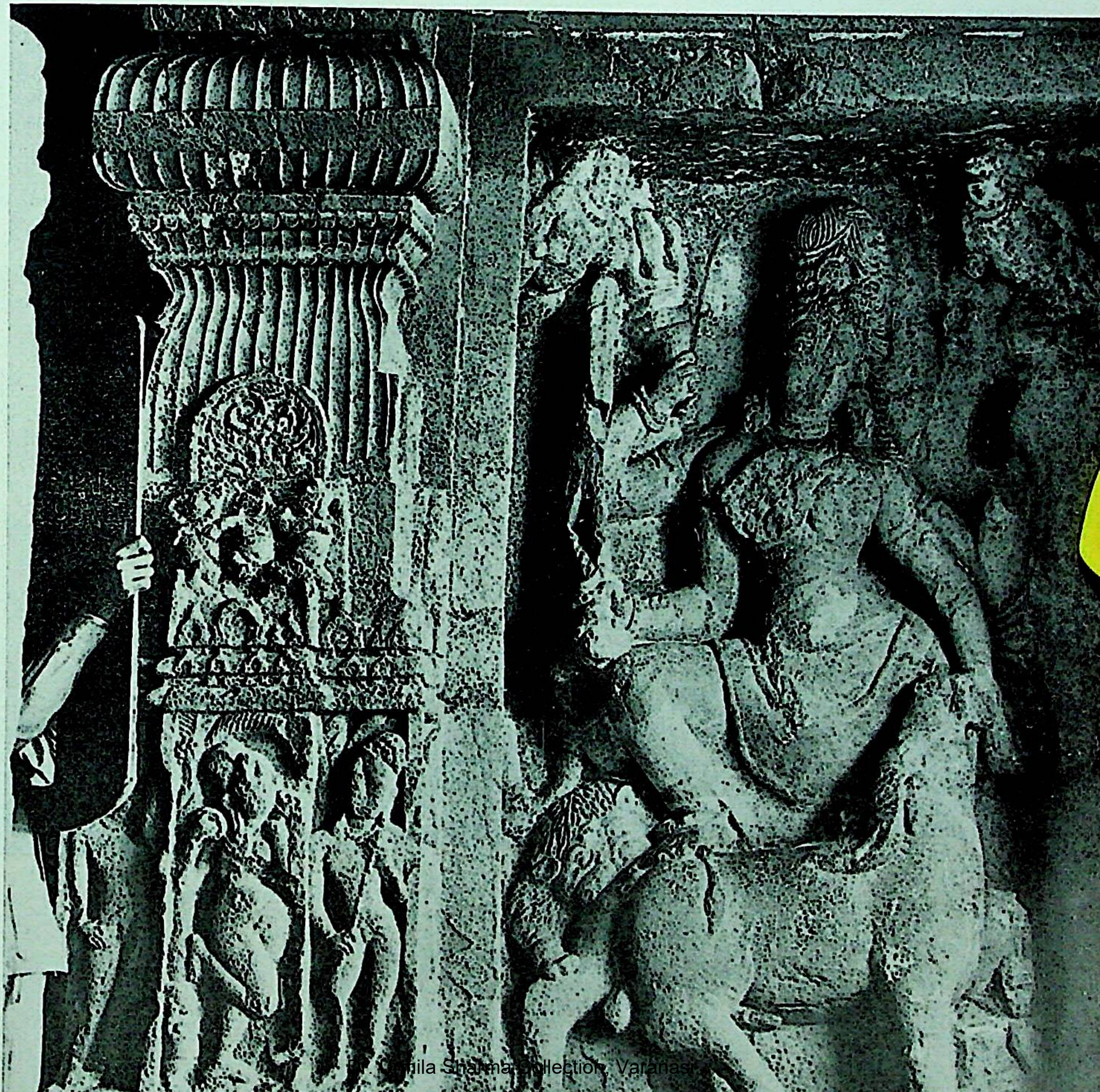


CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

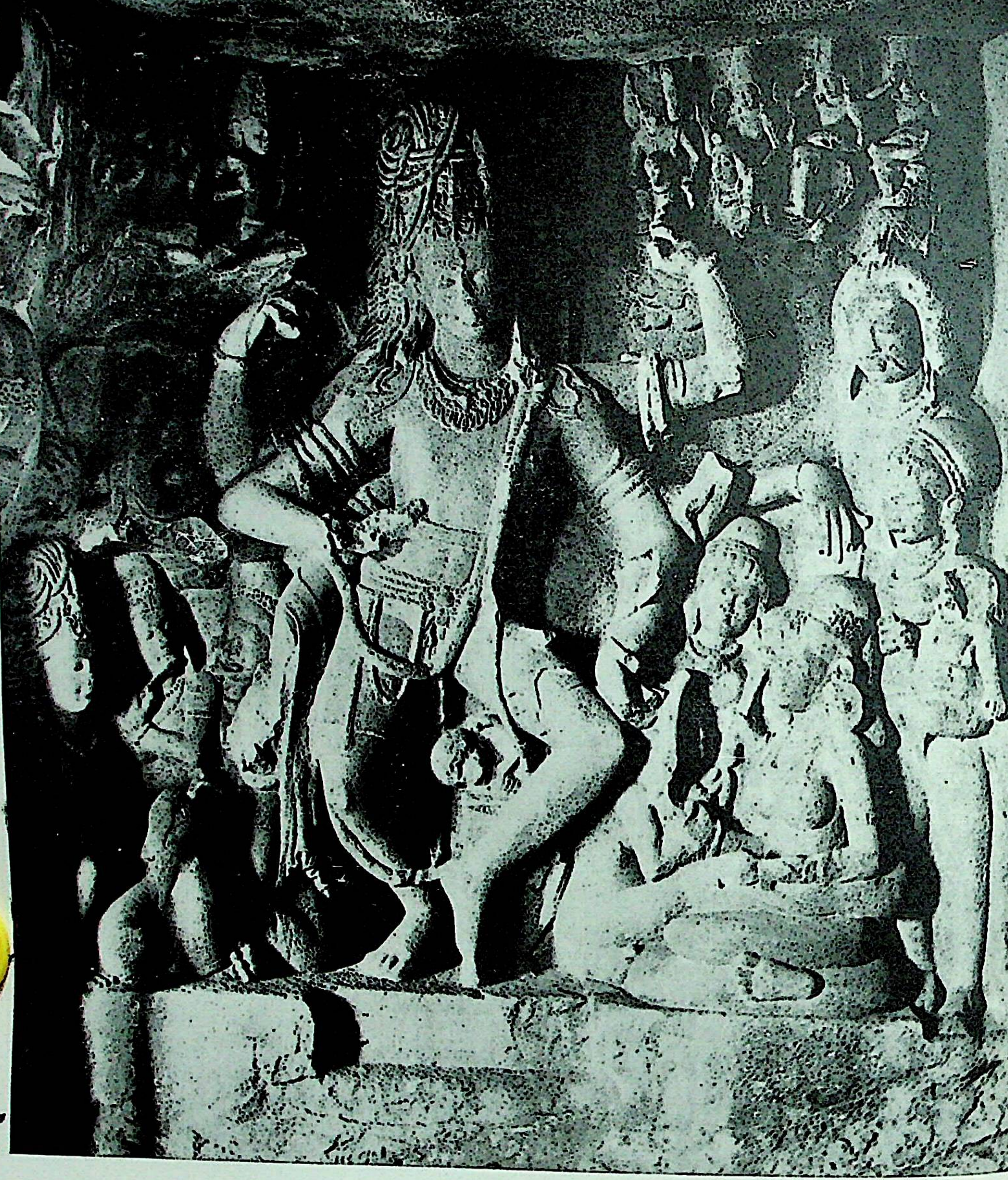


11. Cave 21 : Panel: Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī, east wall, north chamber.

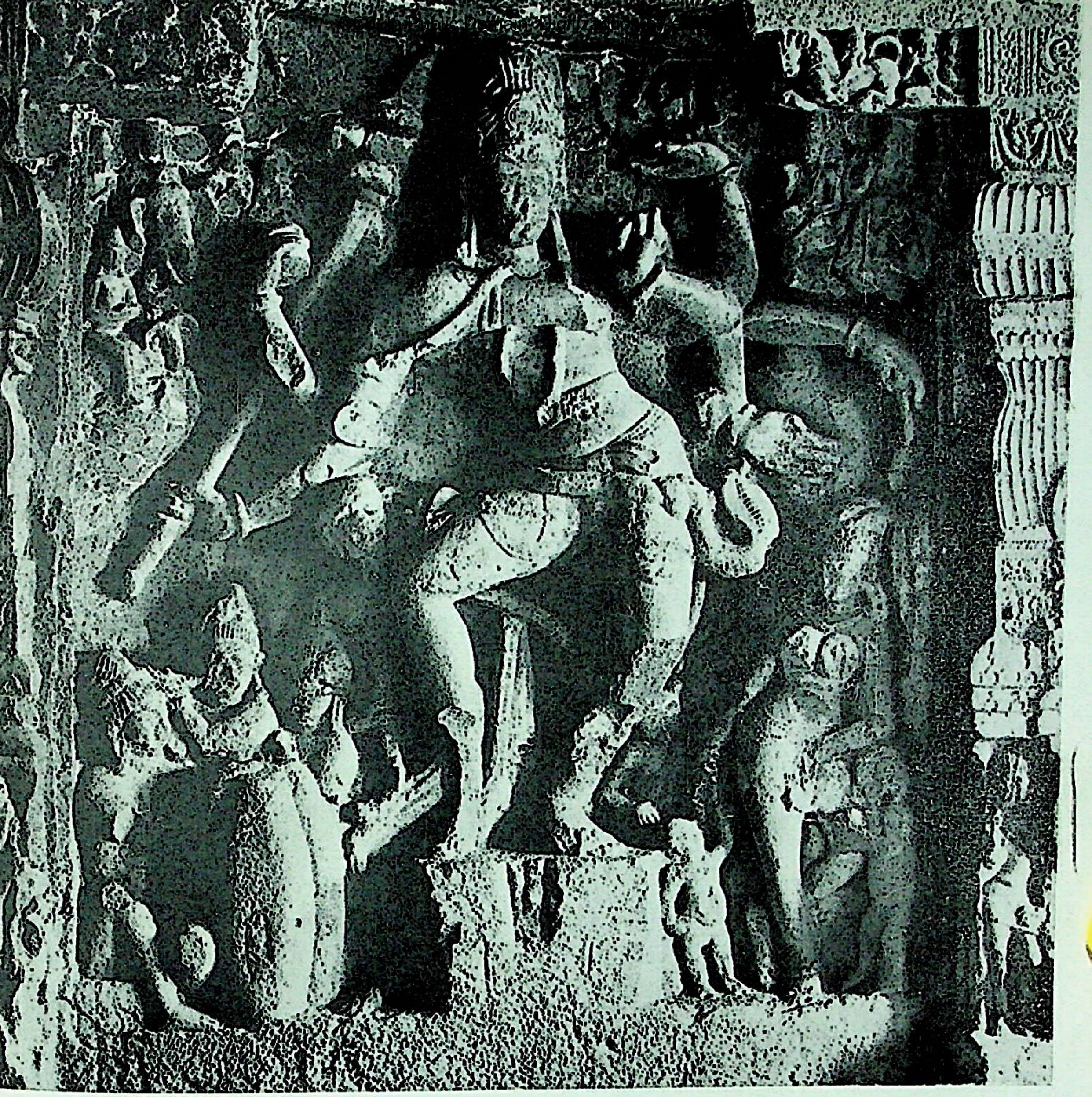
12. Cave 14 : Panel : Durgā Mahishāsuramardinī, south wall.



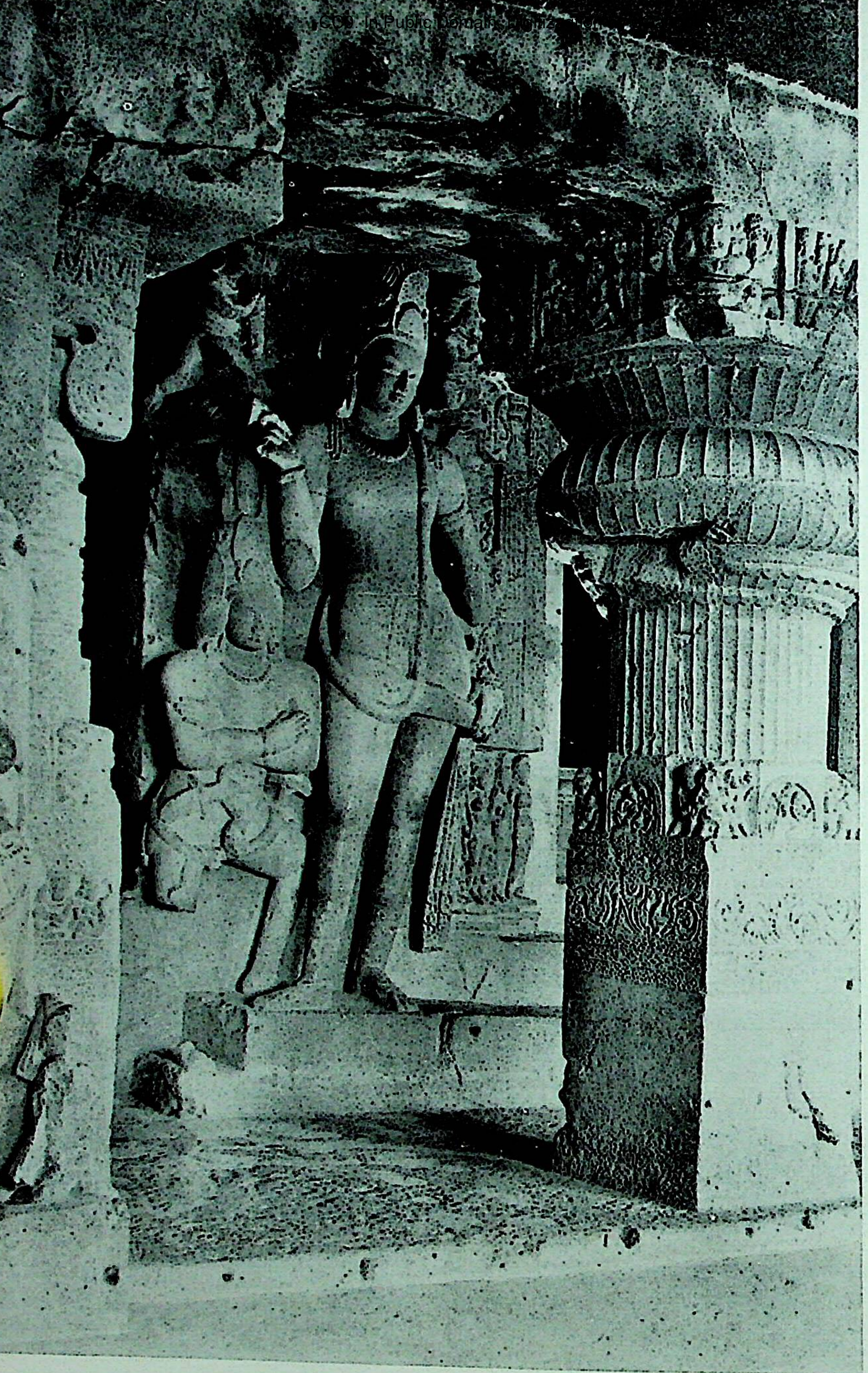
CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri



13. Cave 21 : Panel : Śiva Dancing in Chatura, east wall, south chamber.

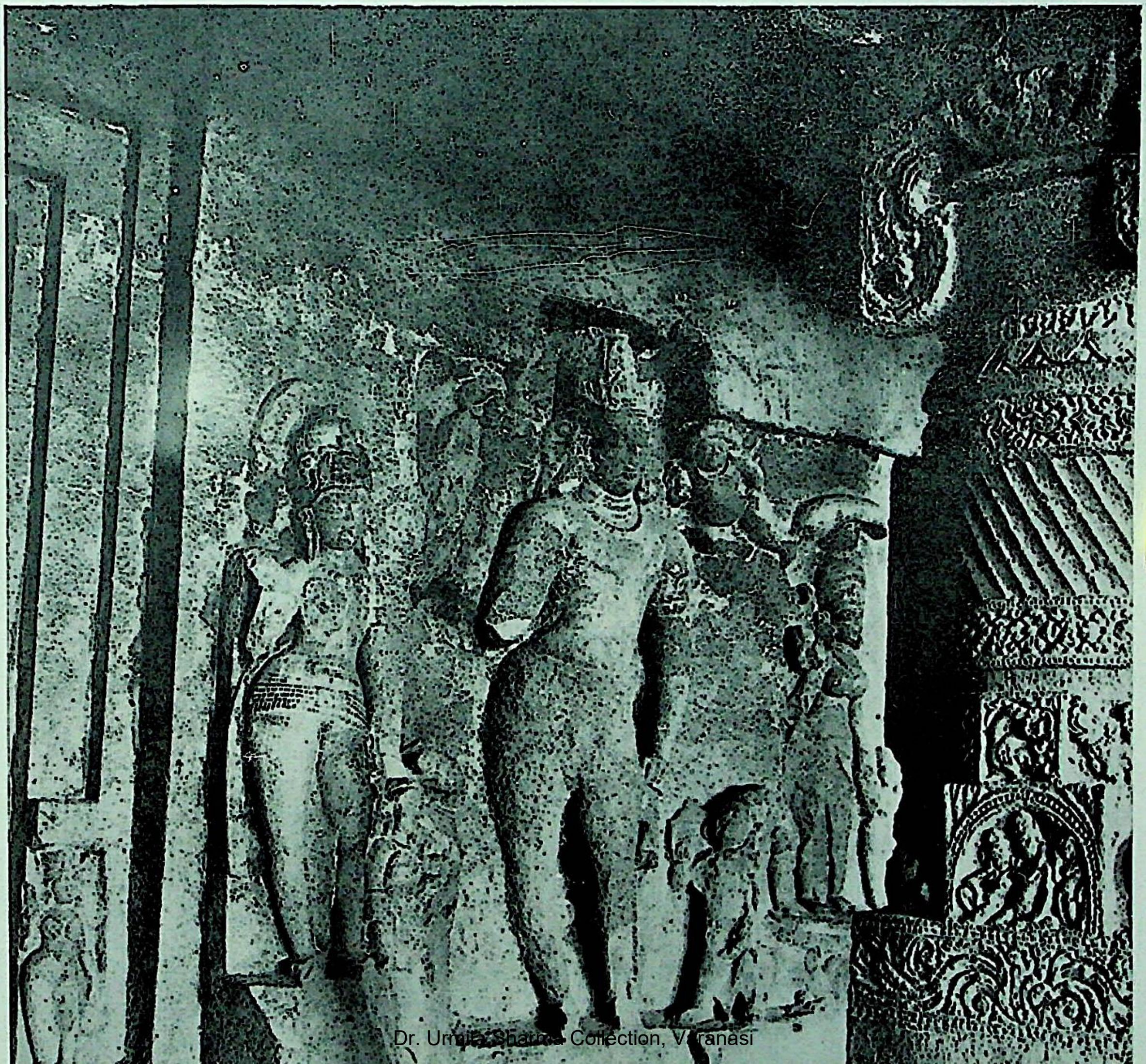


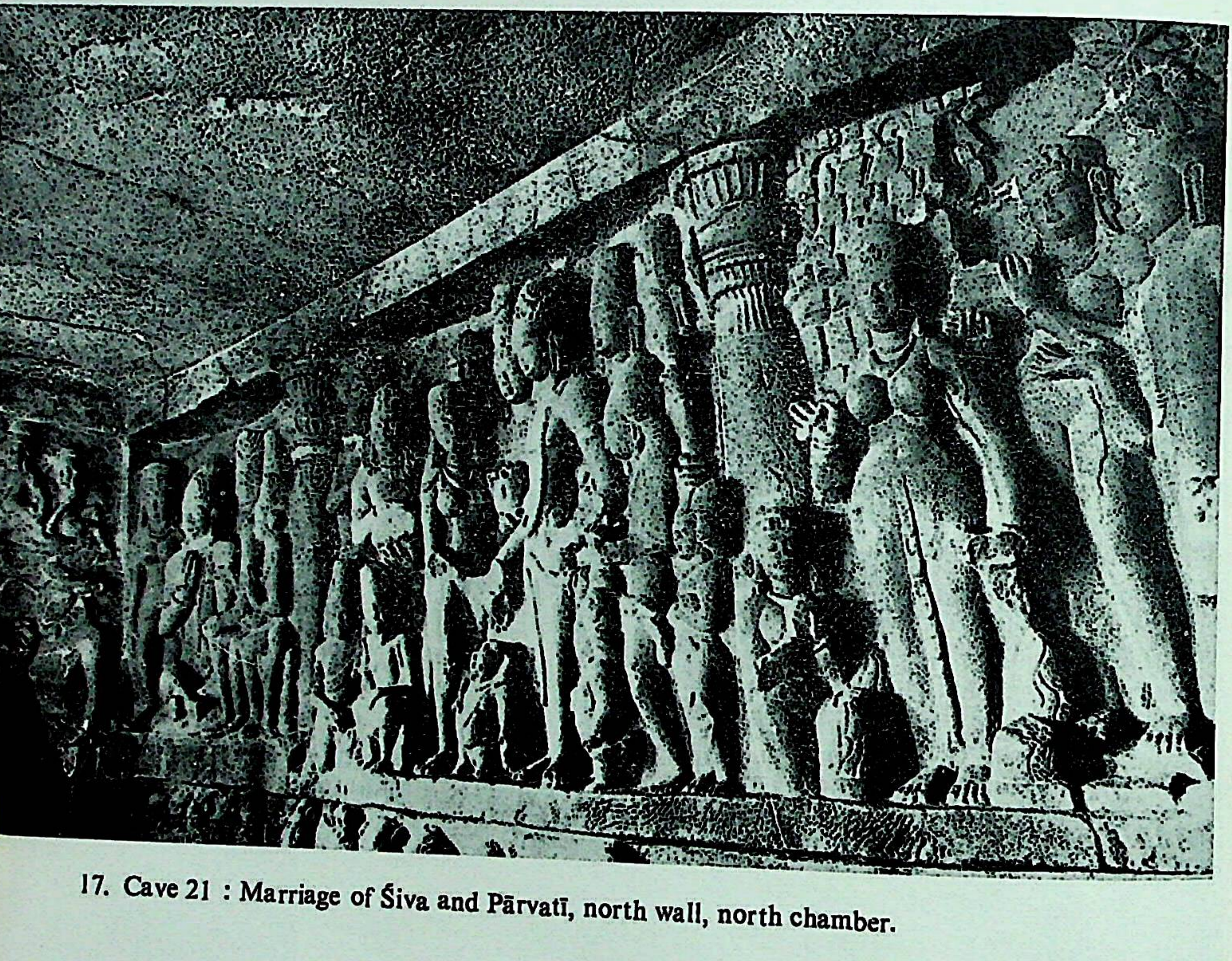
14. Cave 14 : Panel : Śiva Dancing in Lalita, south wall.



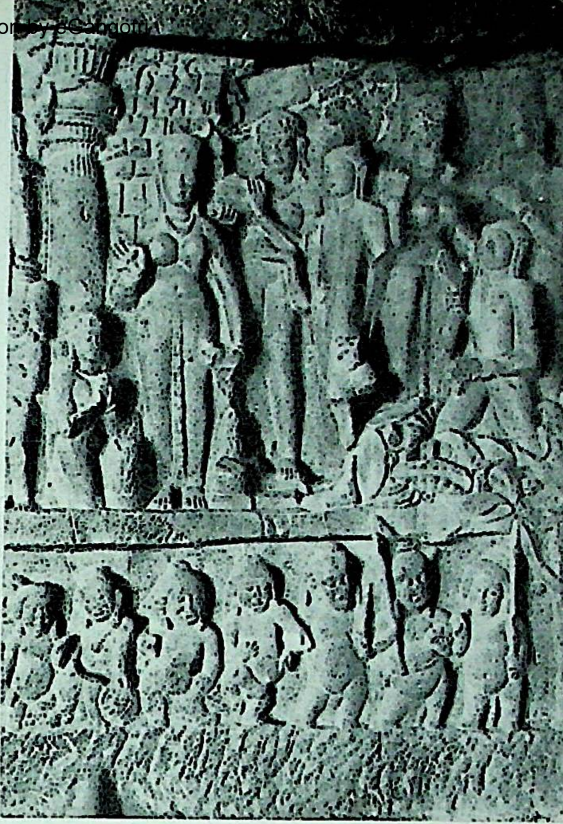
15. Cave 21 : *dvārapāla* (door gurdian), south of shrine door.

16. Cave 14 : *dvārapāla* (door guardian) and accompanying figures, south of shrine door.

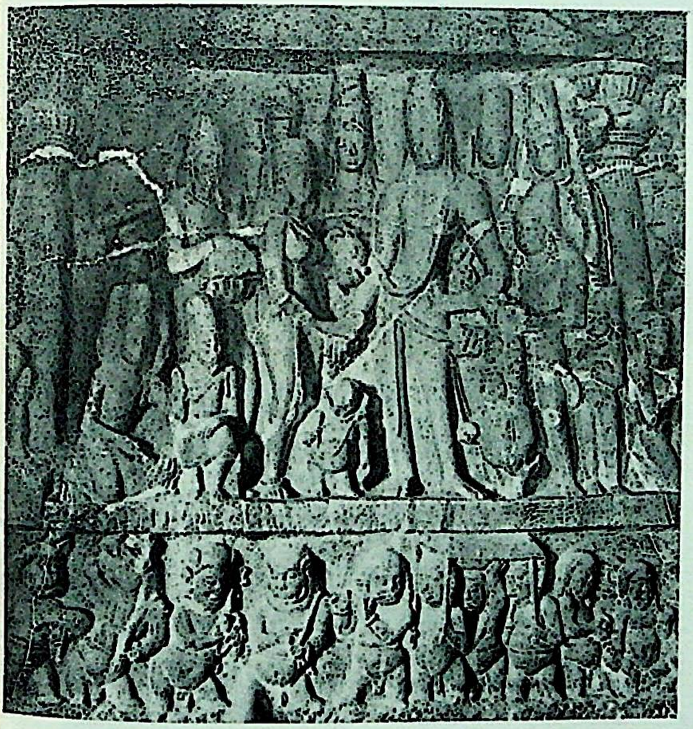




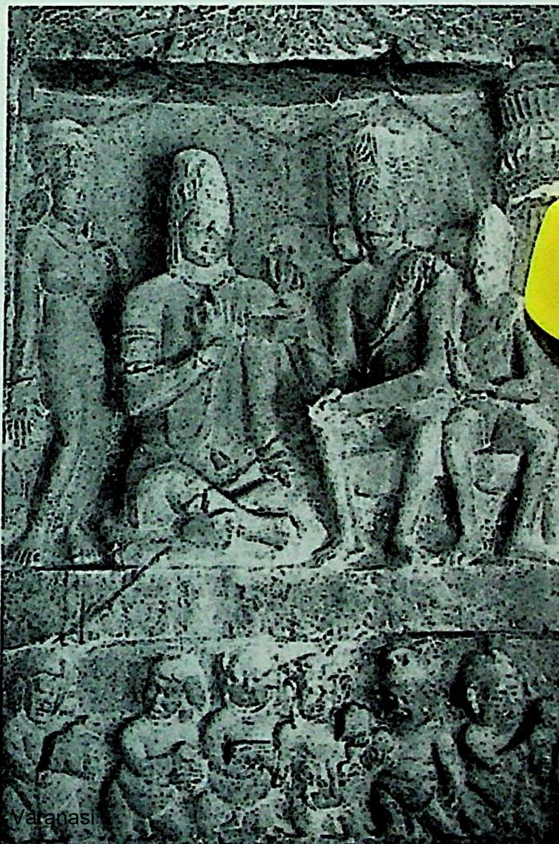
17. Cave 21 : Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, north wall, north chamber.



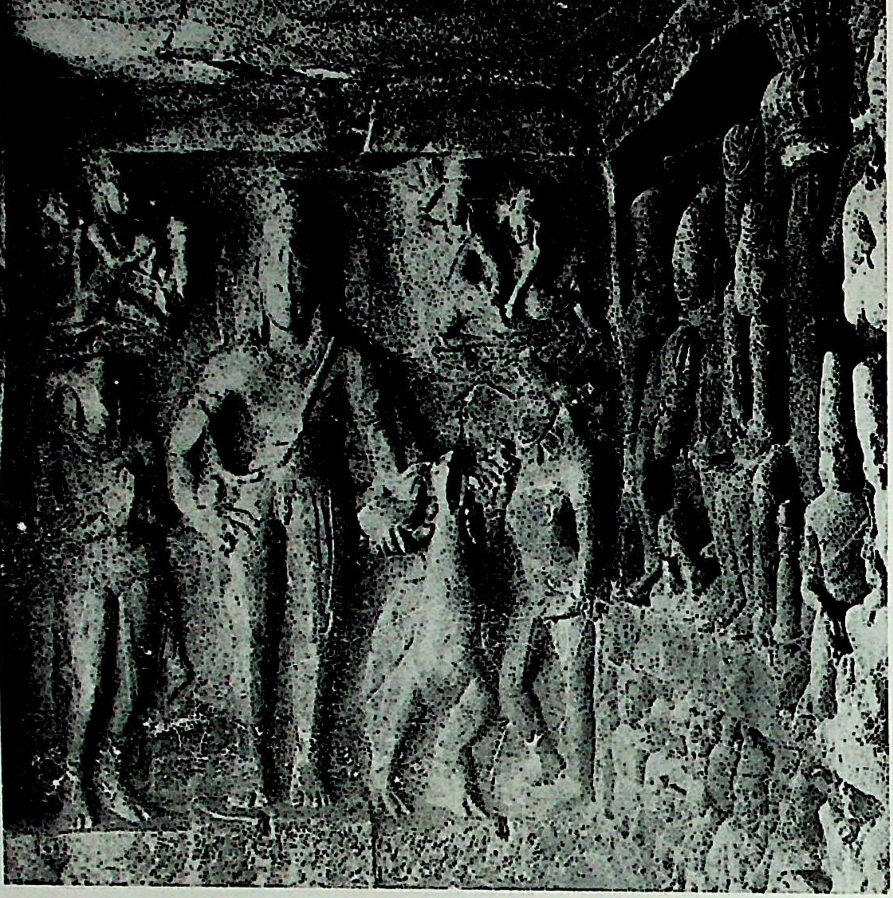
18. Cave 21 : Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, east section, Śiva emerges from pond, Pārvatī doing *tapas* (penances). north wall, north chamber.



19. Cave 21 : Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, central section, the wedding, north wall, north chamber.

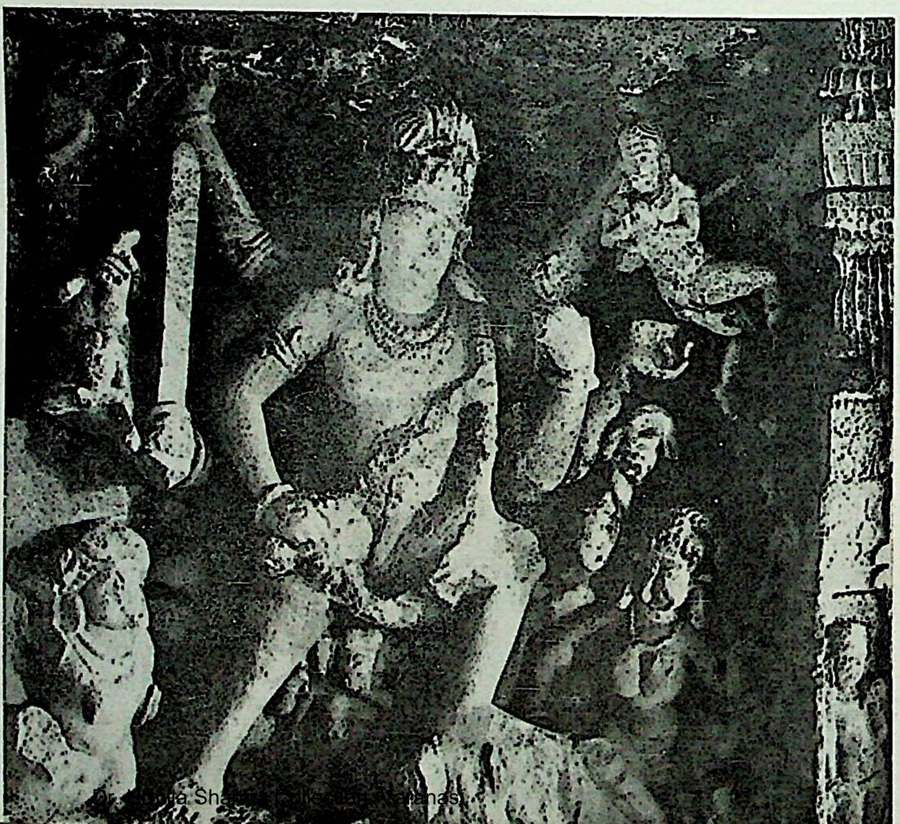


20. Cave 21 : Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, west section, Brahmā blesses Śiva and Pārvatī, north wall, north chamber.



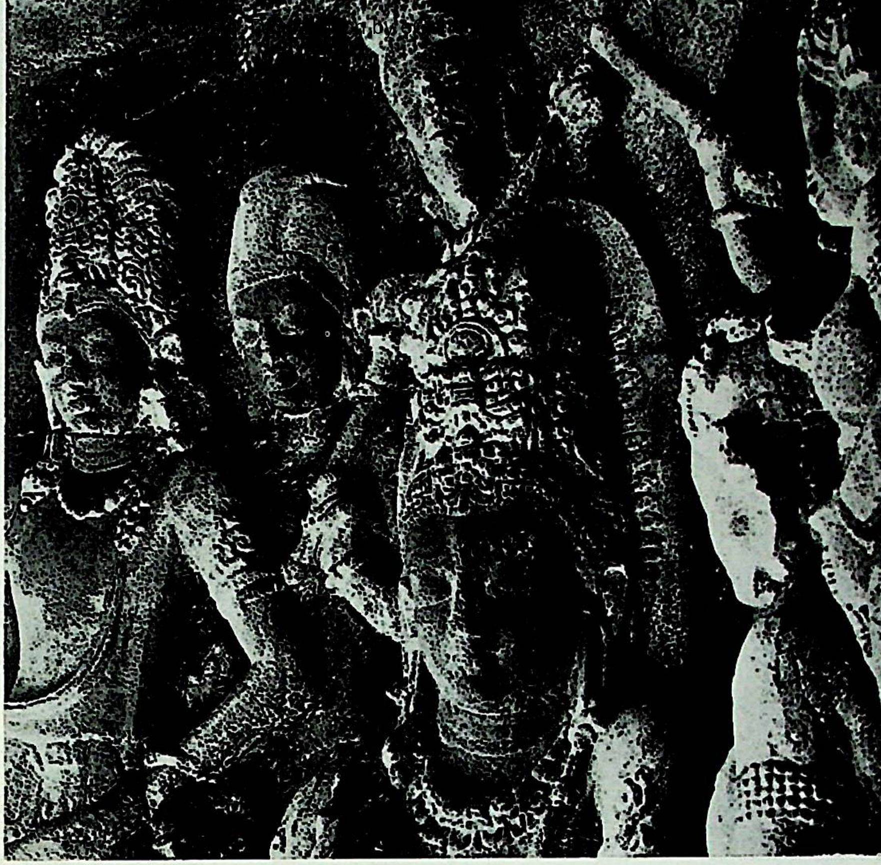
21. Cave 21: Panel: Kārtikeya with Goat-Headed Attendants, west wall, north chambe

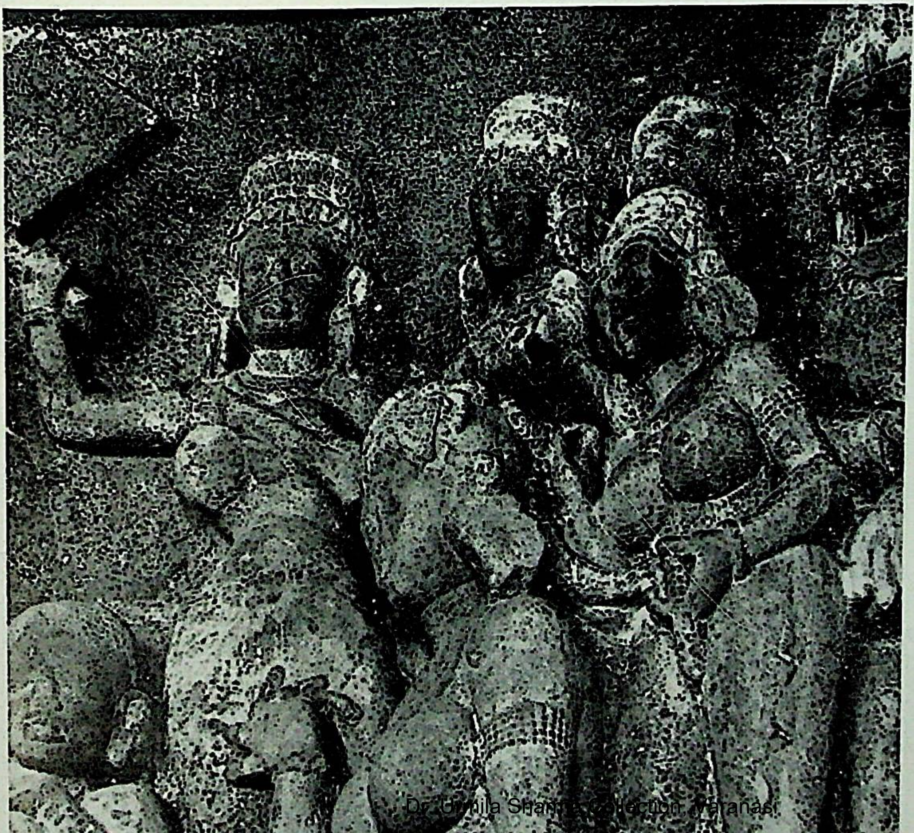
22. Cave 14: Panel : Andhakāsura, south wall.



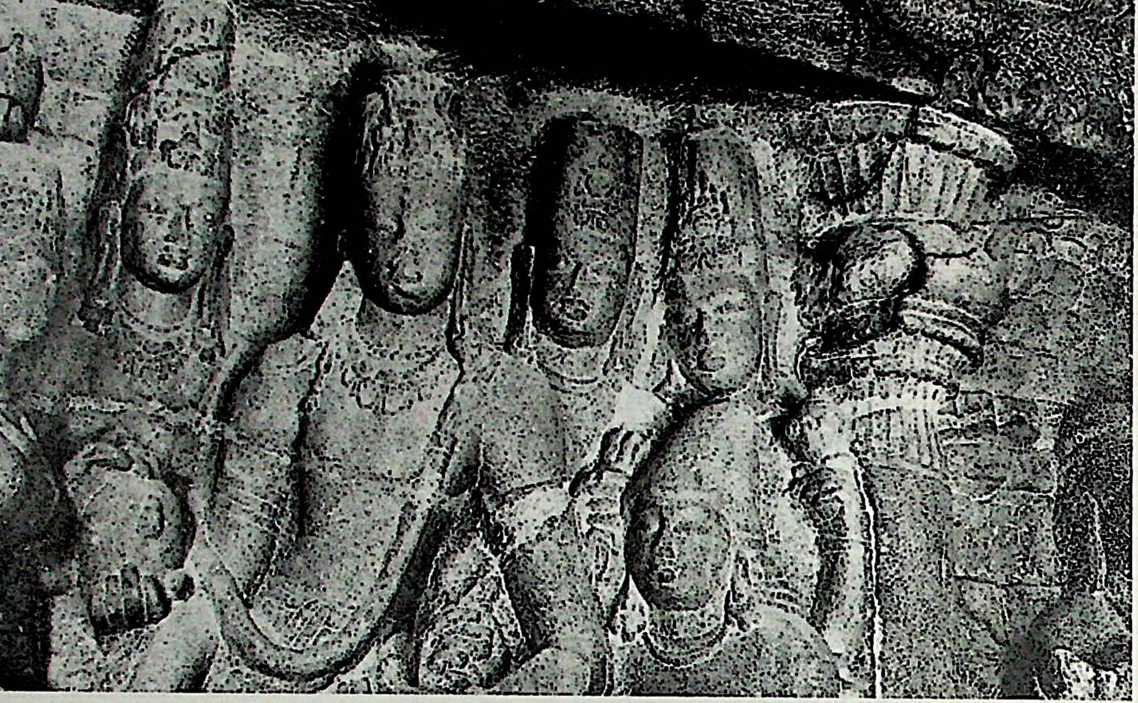
Dr. [illegible] Sharma Collection, Varanasi

23. Cave 21: Panel: Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar, Detail, Śiva with Attendants.



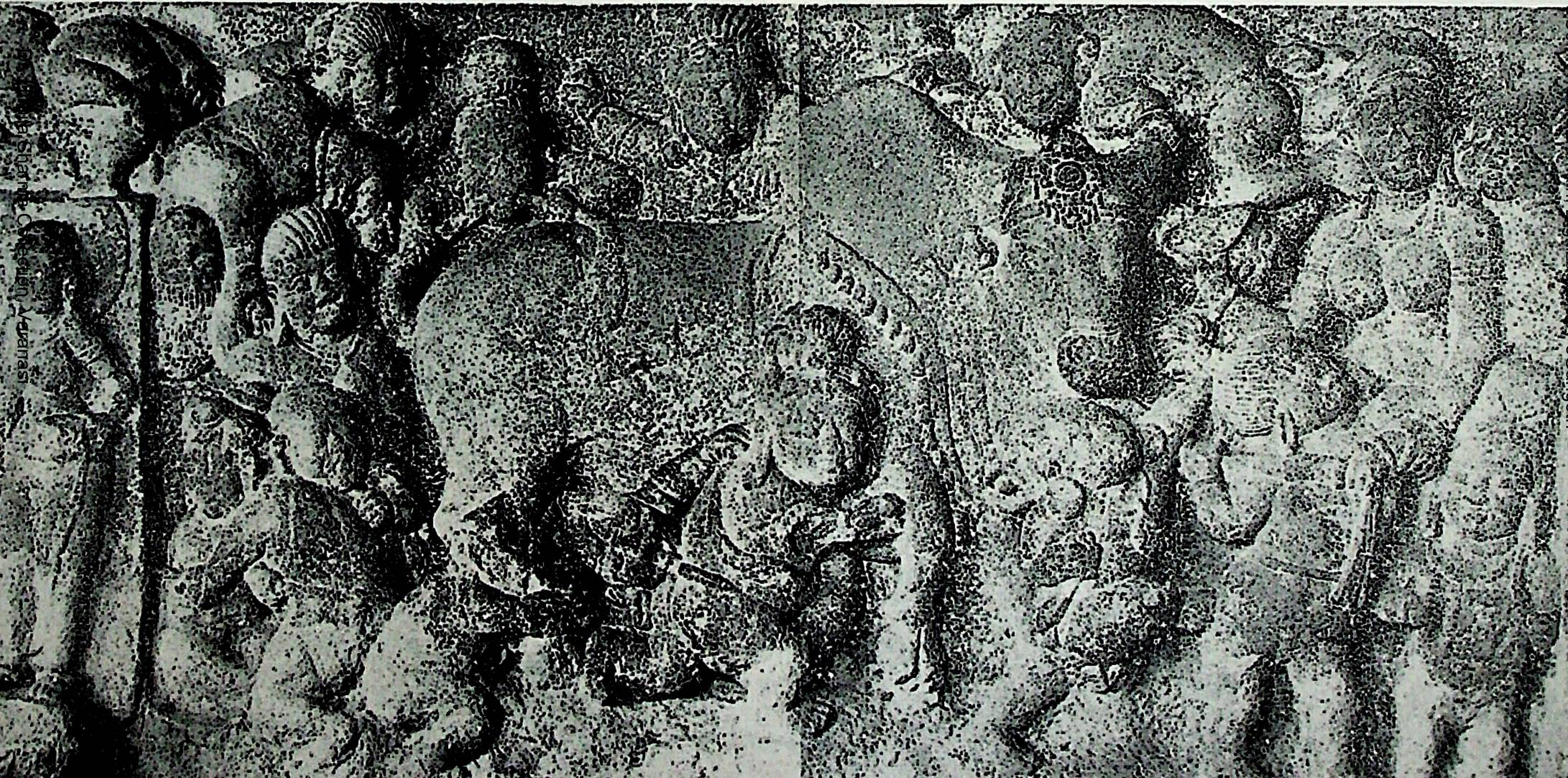


24. Cave 21: Detail of Panel: Pārvatī with Attendants, Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar.



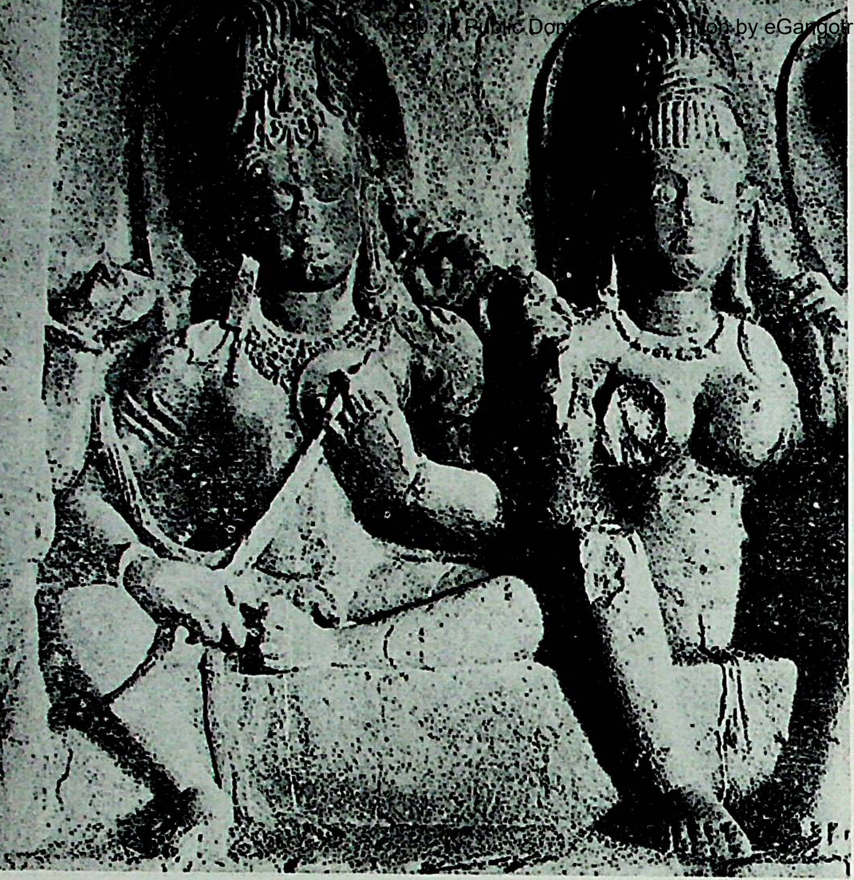
25. Cave 21: Detail of Panel: central section, Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, north wall, north chamber.

26. Cave 21: Detail of Panel: *Gaṇas* sporting with Nandī, Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar.



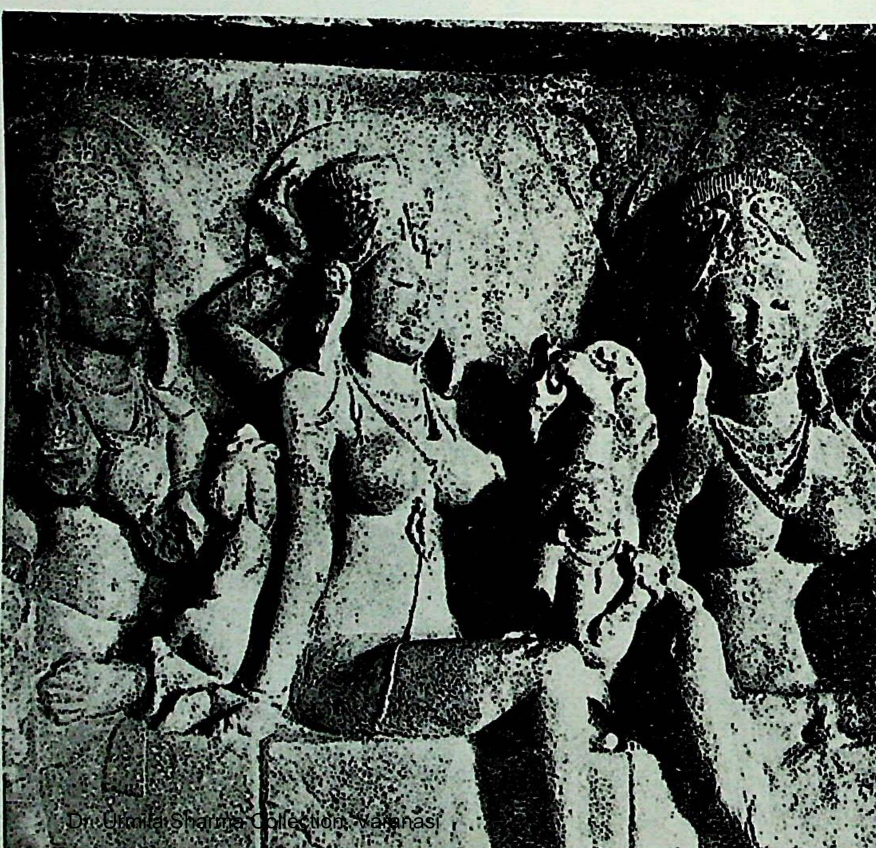
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

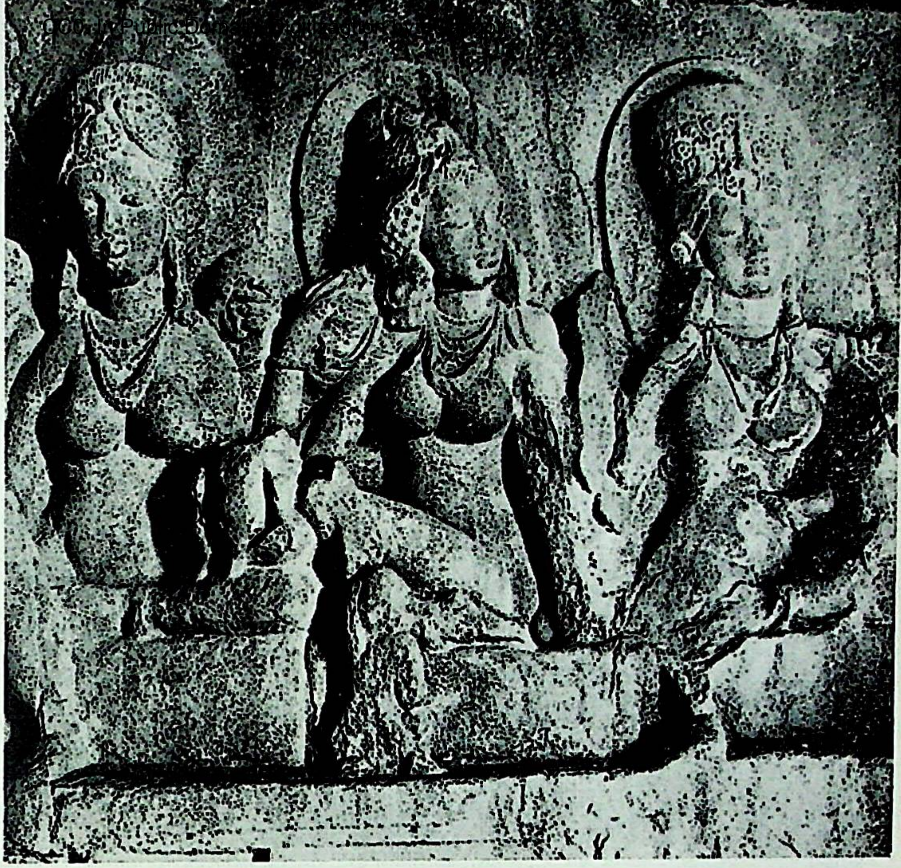


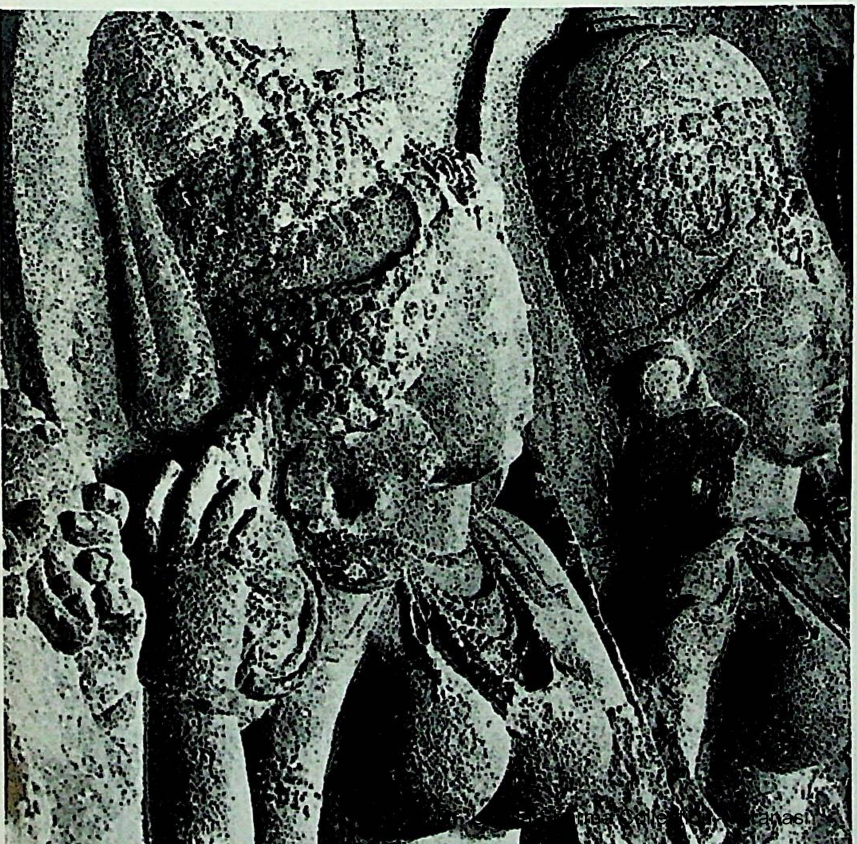
27. Cave 21: Detail: *Sapta Mātrikās*, Vīrabhadra (*Vīṇādhara*) and Brāhmaṇī. south wall, south chamber.

28. Cave 21: Detail : *Sapta Mātrikā,* Maheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaishnavi, south wall, south chamber.



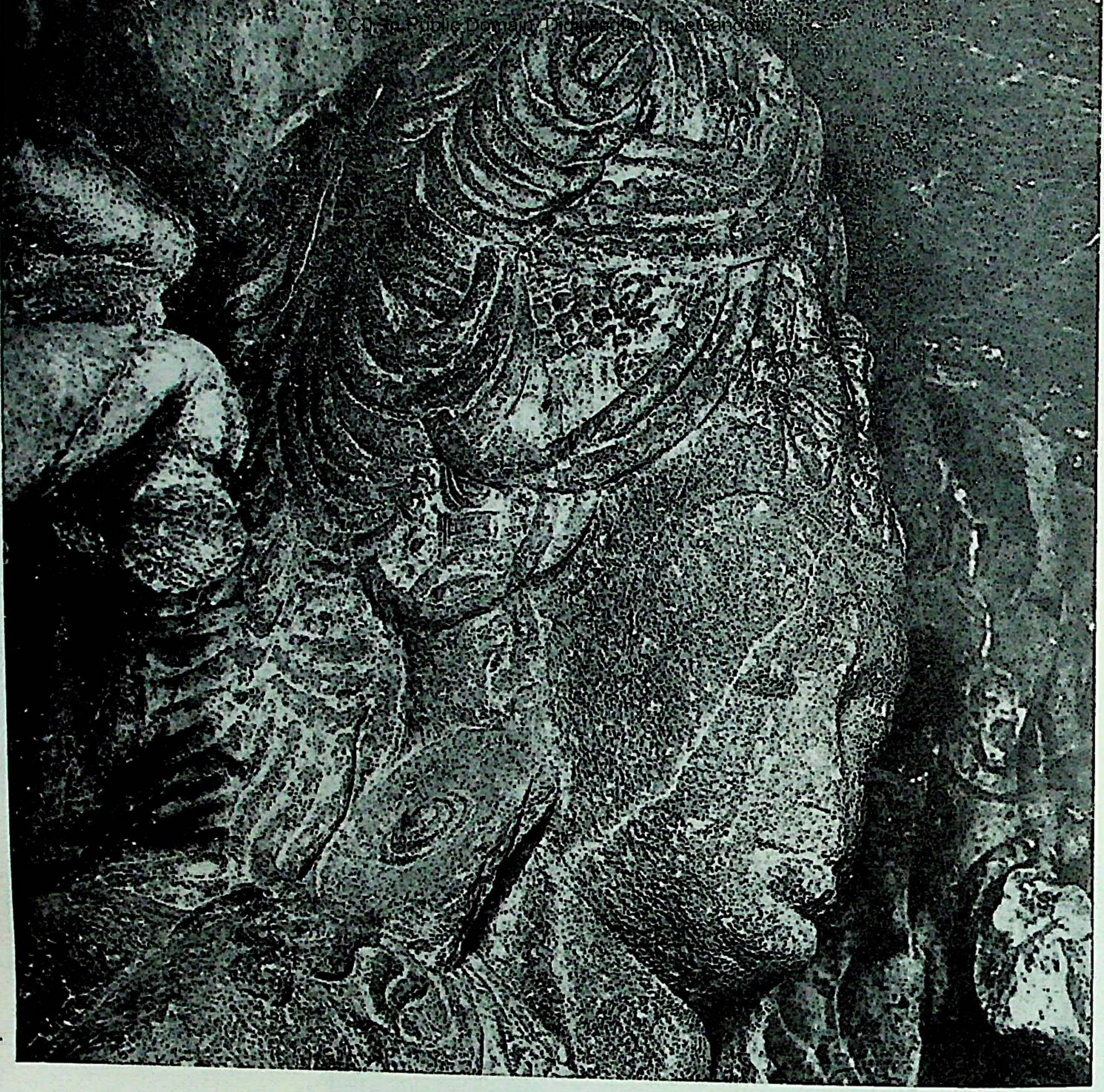
29. Cave 21: Detail of *Sapta Mātrikā:* Vaishṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, south wall, south chamber.





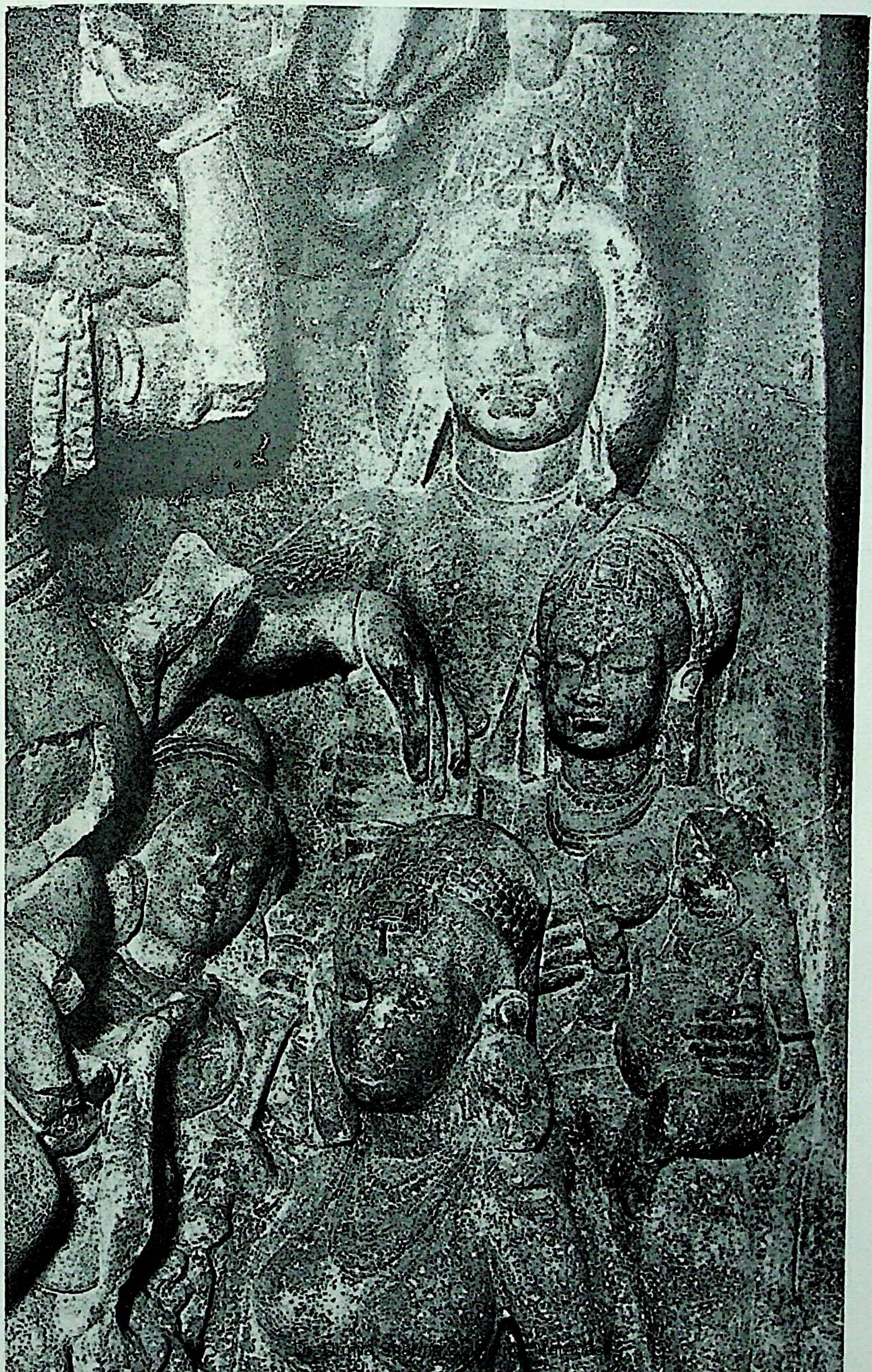
30. Cave 21: *Sapta Mātrikā*, detail, headdresses: Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, south wall, south chamber.

CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

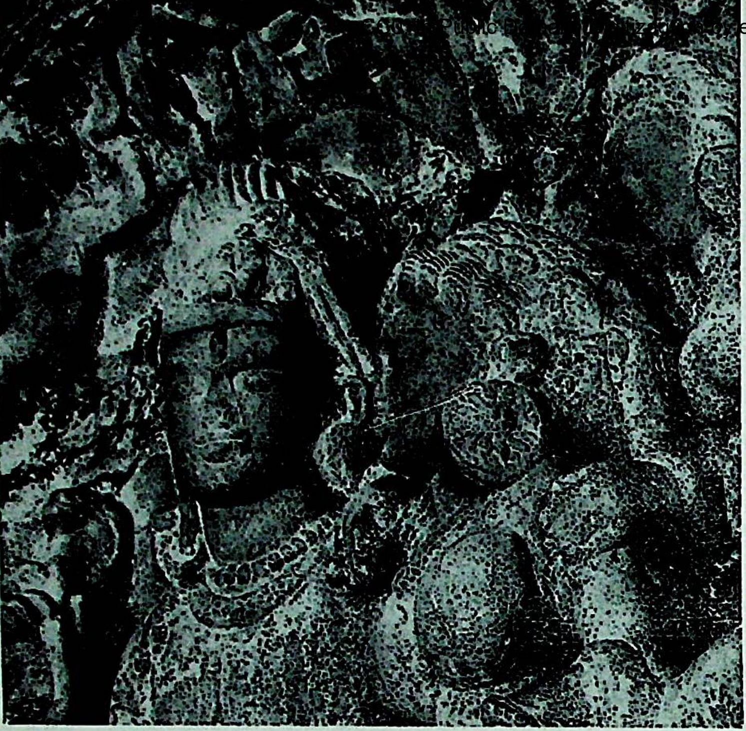


31. Cave 21: Detail of Śiva Dancing in Chatura, the headdress from the north.

32. Cave 21: Detail of Śiva Dancing in Chatura, Pārvatīand entourage.

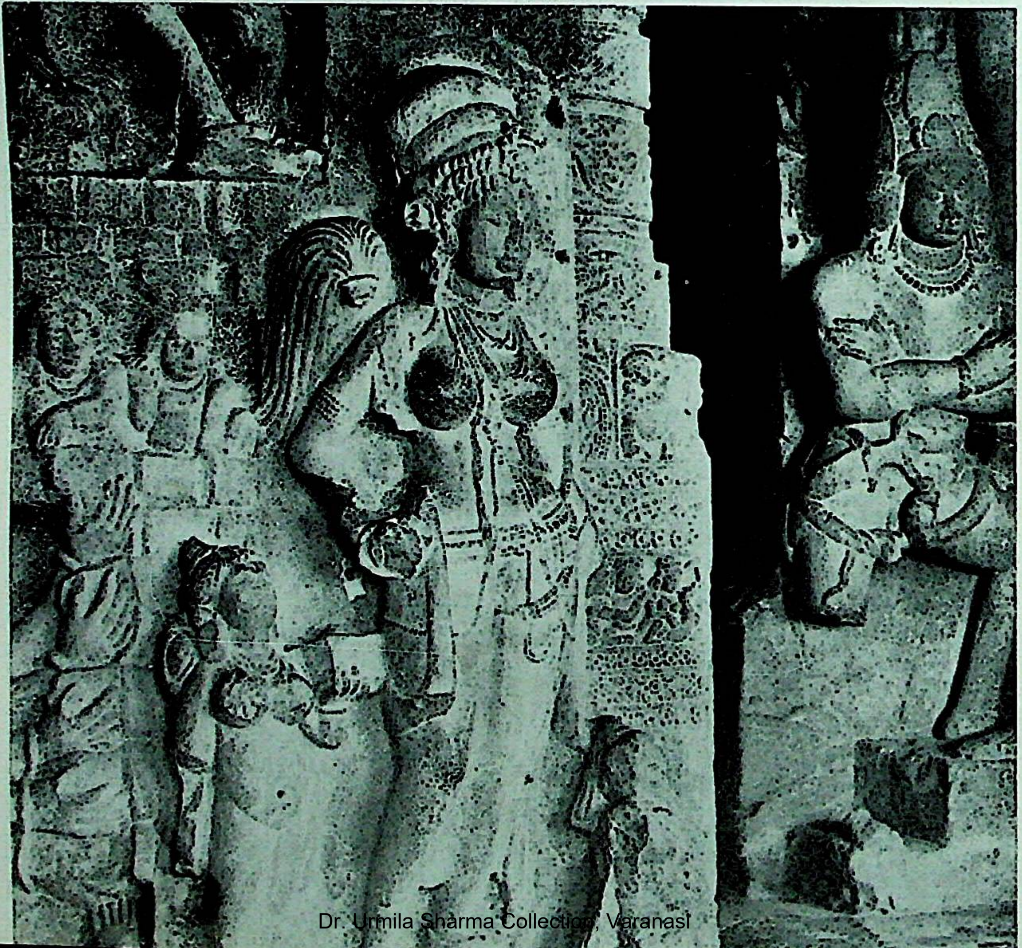


CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitized by eGangotri

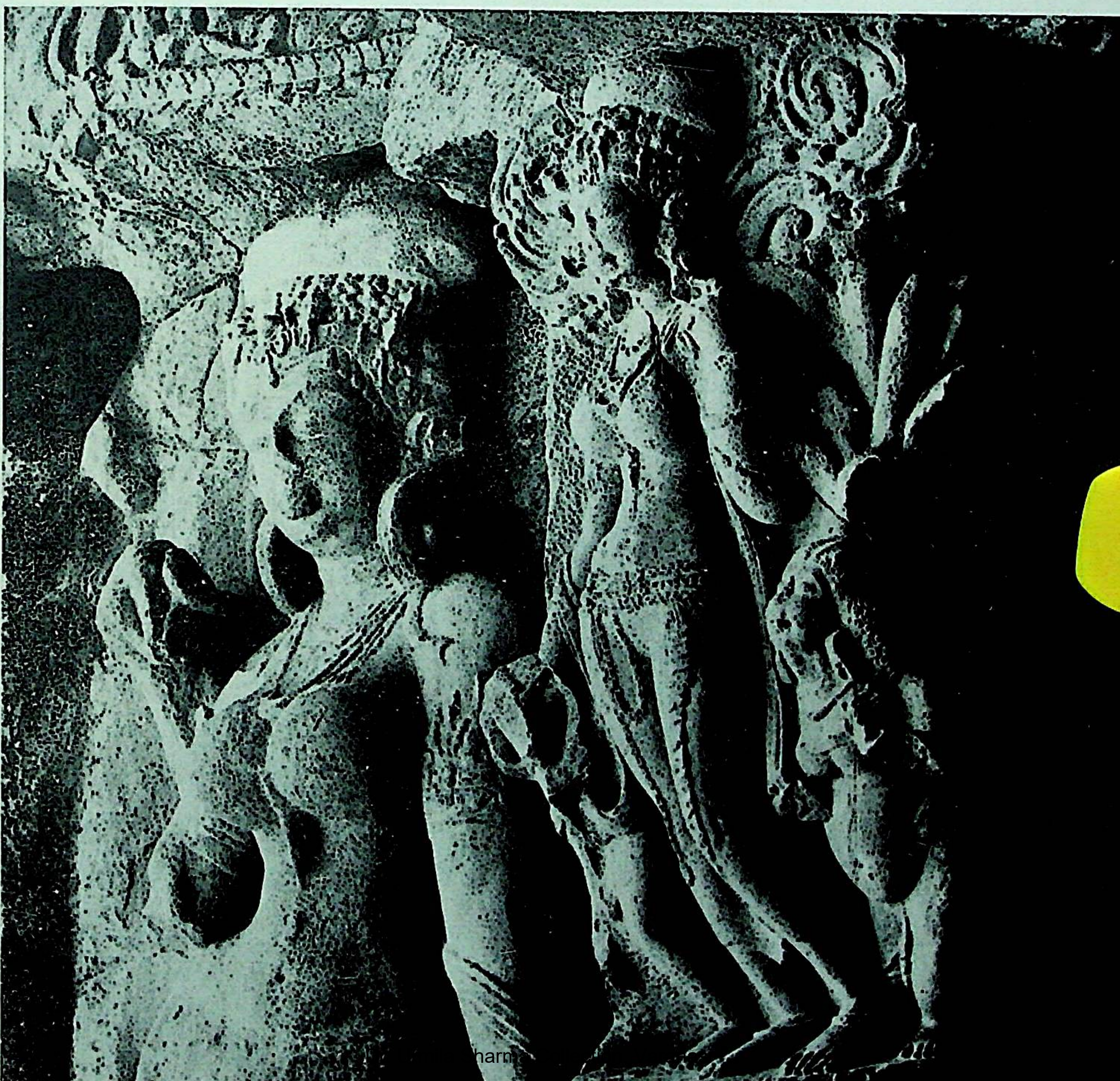


33. Cave 21: detail of Rāvaṇa shaking Mt. Kailāsa, heads of Śiva and Pārvatī from south.

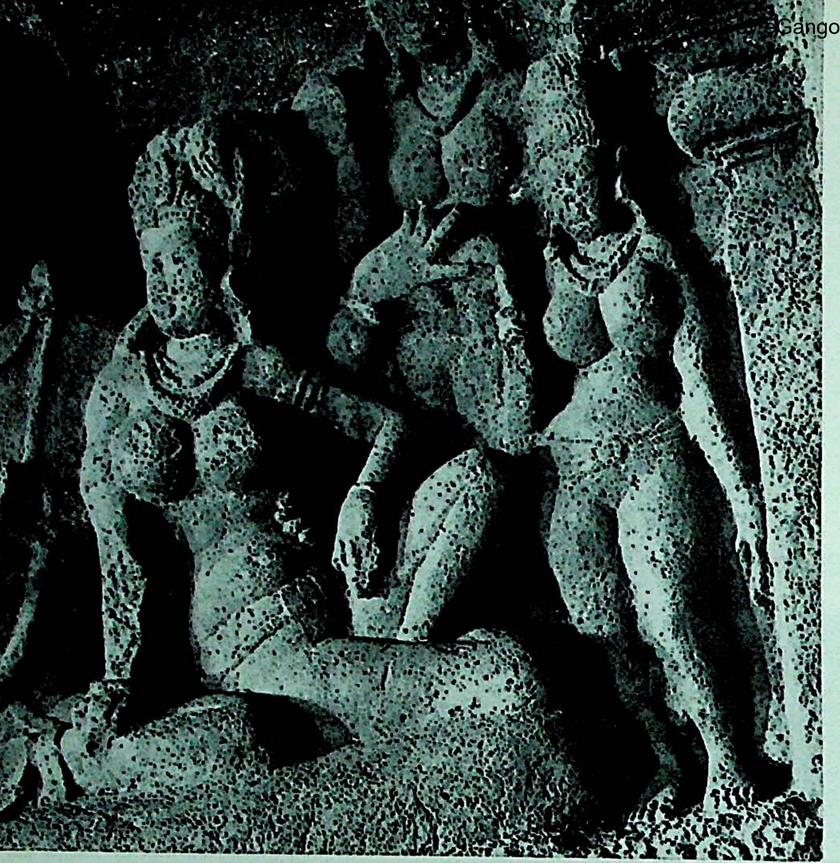
34. Cave 21: *Chowribearer* (fan holder) on north side of Rāvaṇa shaking Mt. Kailāsa.



35. Cave 21: Gaṅgā and a *śālabhañjikā* with female dwarf.

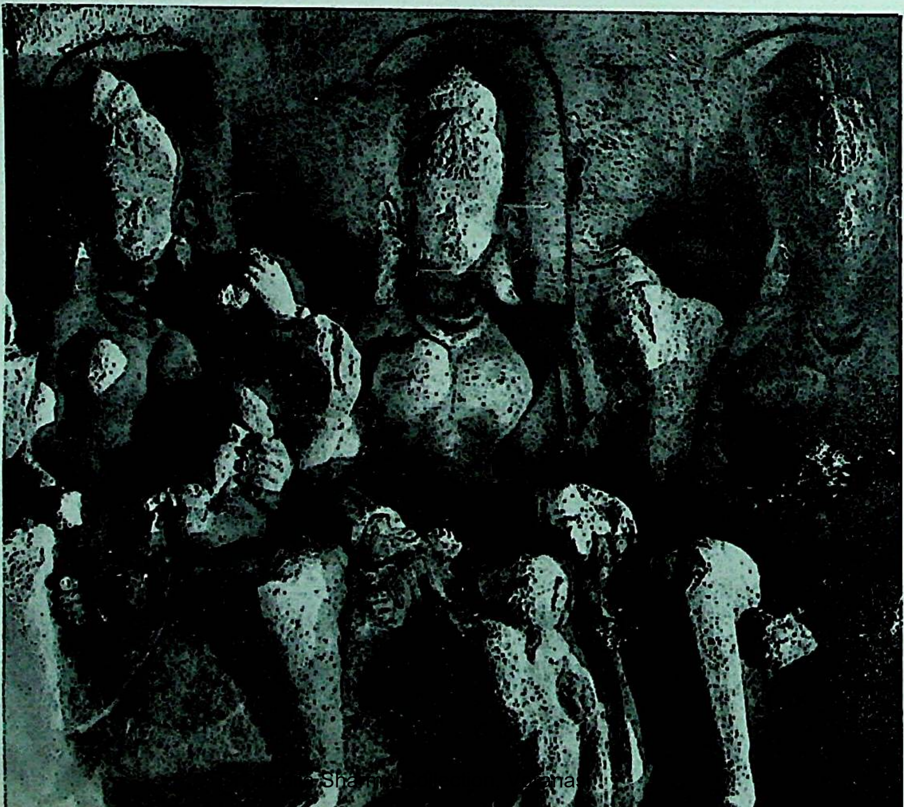


Gangotri



36. Cave 14: Panel: Umāmaheśvara, detail, Pārvatī and attendants.

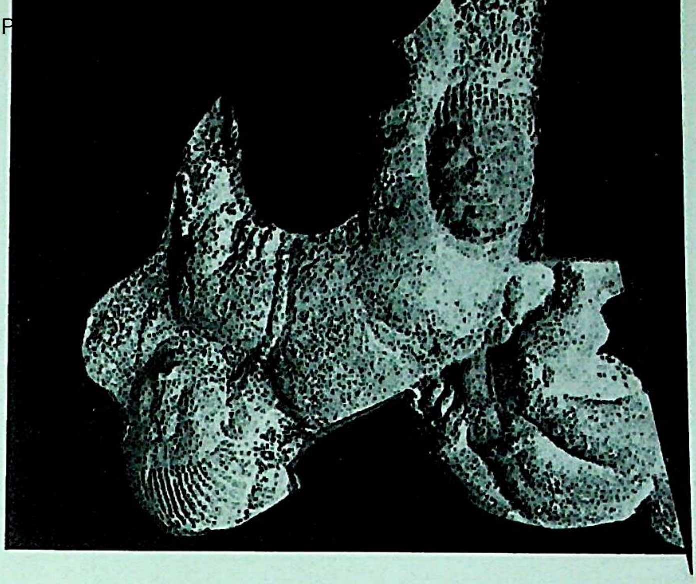
37. Cave 14: Detail of *Sapta Mātrikā* : Vaishnavī with standing baby.

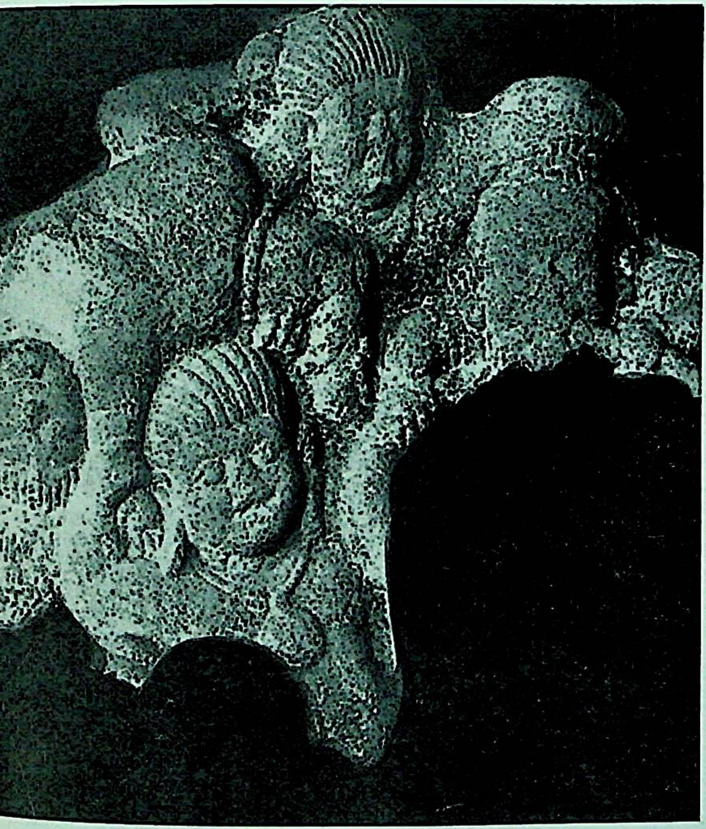


Shastri

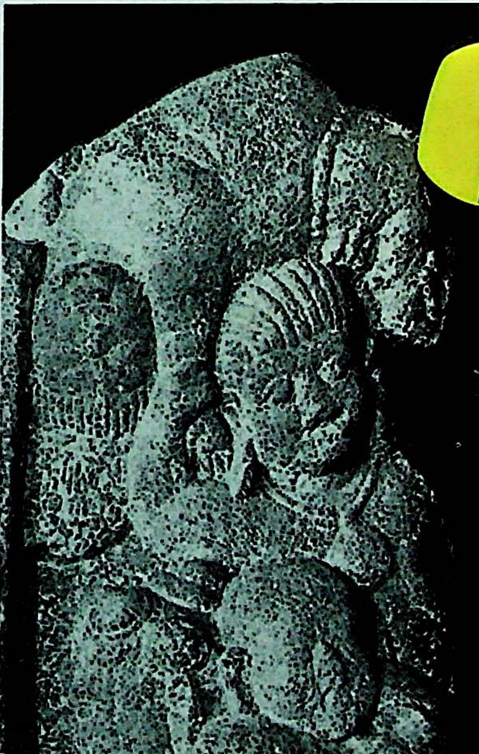
CC0. In P

38. Cave 21: Detail of Śiva and Pārvatī Playing Chausar. 3 *gaṇas*.

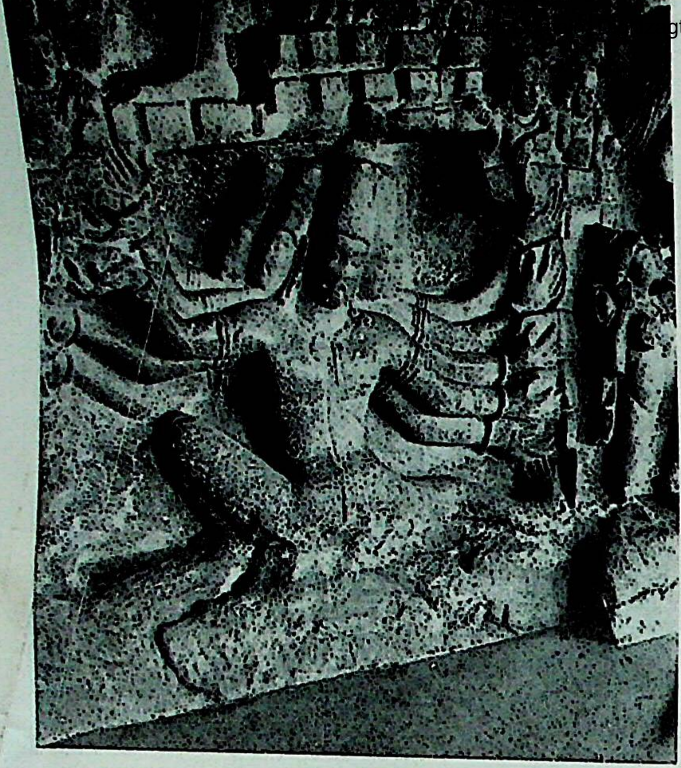




39. Cave 21: Detail : one *gaṇa* has been eliminated and two added.

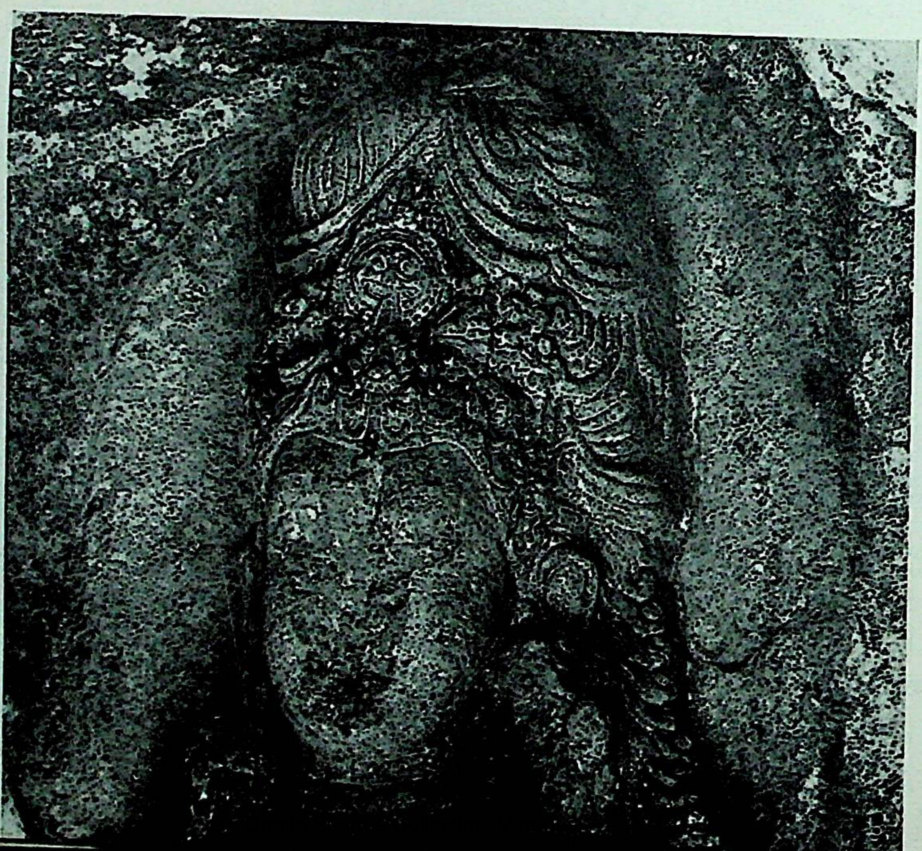


40. Cave 21: Detail: two *gaṇas* eliminated, two added.



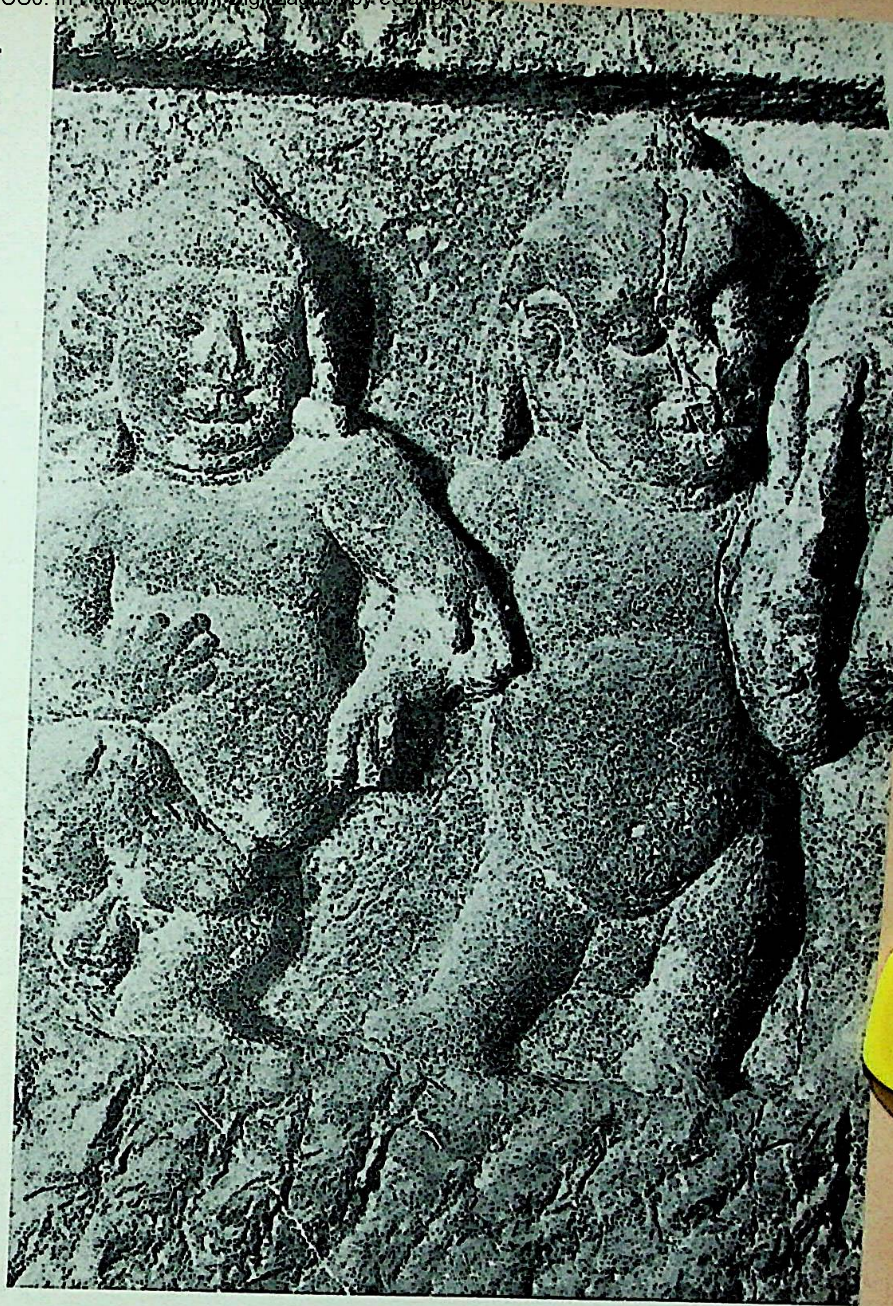
41. Cave 21: Detail of Rāvaṇa shaking Mt. Kailāsa, Rāvaṇa.

42. Cave 14: Detail of headdress, Mahishāsuramardinī, south wall.

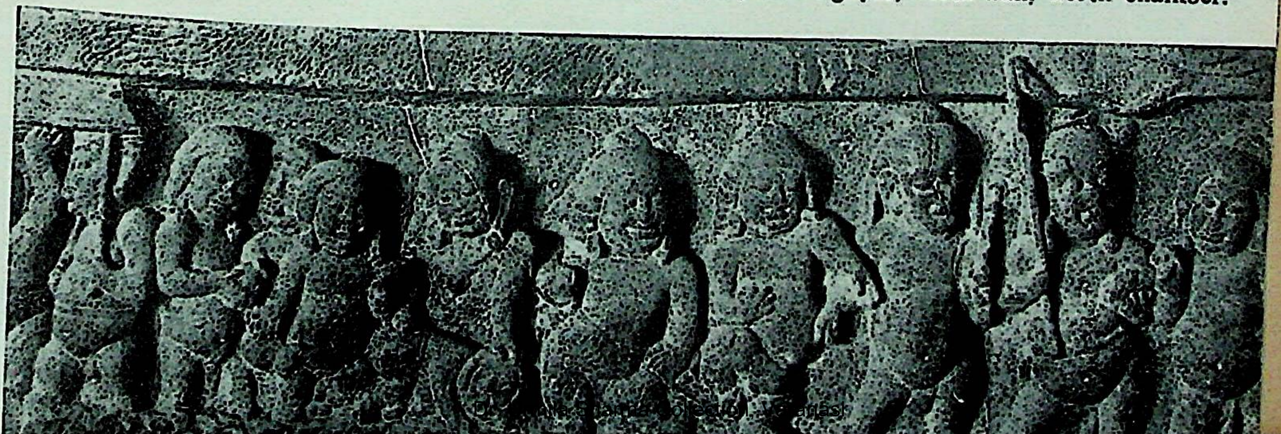


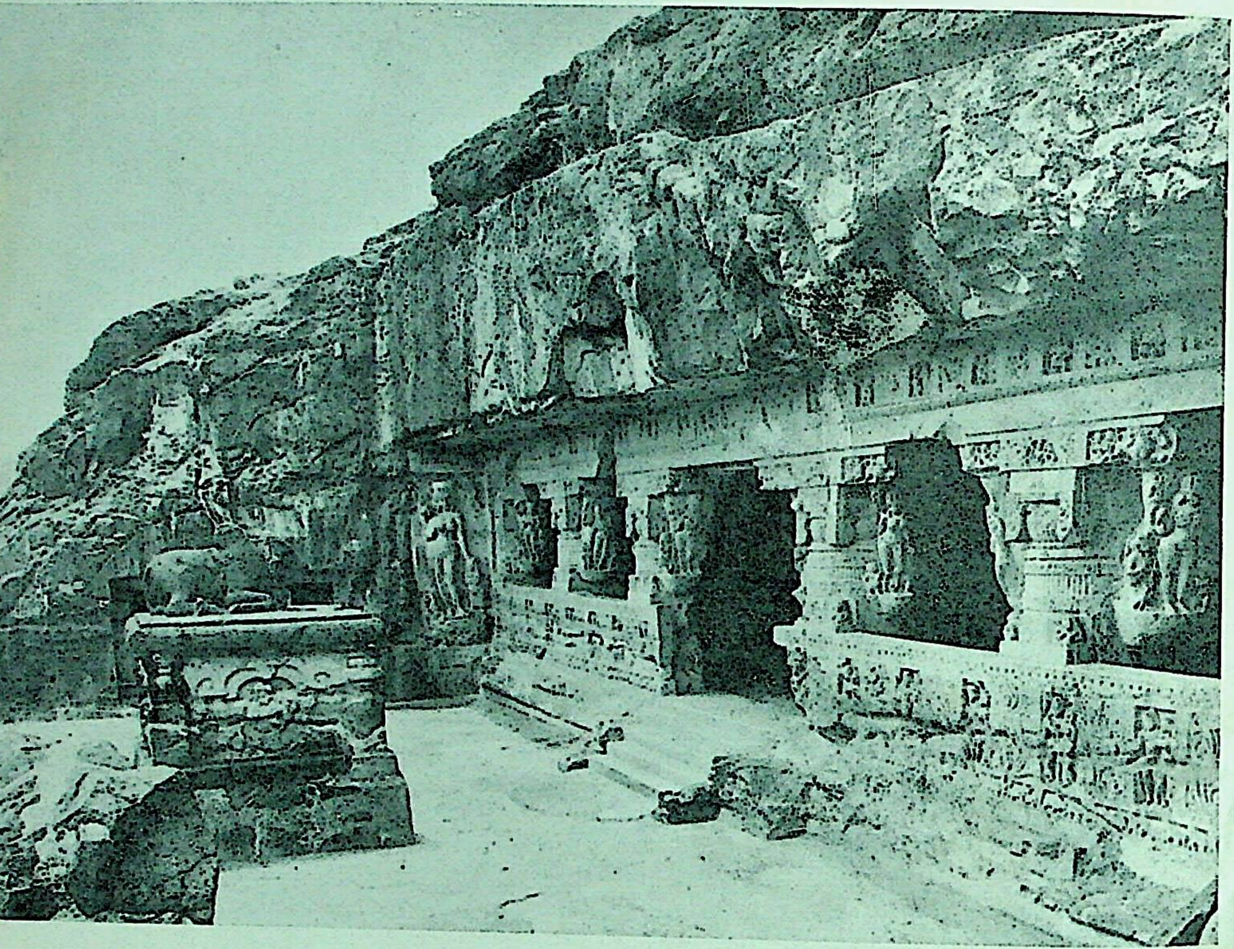
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitized by eGangotri

43. Cave 21: Detail of Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, two *gaṇas*, north wall, north chamber.



44. Cave 21: Detail of Marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī, line of *gaṇas*, north wall, north chamber.





. Cave 21: Exterior view facing north.

THE GUPTA STYLE OF SCULPTURE FROM THE CITY OF BANARAS

ANAND KRISHNA

Banaras, the ancient Varanasi, has been a centre of religion, art and culture from the very early period of our civilisation; numerous accounts from the Jātakas testify this. However, very few early specimens of stone sculpture are available from the city itself, despite the fact that the suburban Sarnath was producing good sculpture in the Maurya, Śunga and the later periods of our history. The tripartite standing Yaksha (Bharat Kala Bhavan=BKB, acc. No. 971), discovered as a surface find, from Rajghat (Varanasi) by my late father, Sri Rai Krishna Das, is an important example of the Śunga style. Another fragmentary Yaksha figure is known by its mutilated face from the same site (ca. second or first century B. C.).

A snake canopied head and bust of Balarāma (BKB, acc. No. 2/279) found at Rajghat, Varanasi is an important piece of the late Śunga style both in the study of the early iconography of Balarāma, but also shows the placid late Śunga tradition, as contrasted with the bold and ferocious looks of the Yakshas, just mentioned.

I recall seeing fragments of Jaina figures collected in an enclosure, near the temples at Bhadaini (Varanasi), which were worshipped by the lay Hindus as their gods. One or two of them could have been early pieces of the Kushan style. Unfortunately, every single piece of any importance from that group has been lifted away and possibly lost to the country.

The archaeological excavations did not reveal any important stone sculpture from Rajghat, although terracotta figurines were discovered in abundance. These clay figures, talking of the Gupta period, may be ascribed to the fifth century style, when a revival of art was going on at Sarnath as well. On the other hand we shall try to show in the following passages that at the same time there seems to have existed the fourth century Gupta style, in certain other centres of the city of Varanasi.

Indications of a traditional style of stone sculpture in the Varanasi region of ca. third-fourth centuries A. D. is represented by a solitary piece in Bharat Kala Bhavan. This was discovered by my father from a neighbouring village in the Ghazipur District. I consider this as a key piece, in representing a complex style. It is a devotee, carrying a Śiva *liṅgam* (BKB, acc. No. 2/223) on his head. The face is ovaloid, showing a continuation of the Roman influenced Gāndhāra tradition. This is also confirmed by the naturalistic treatment of flesh and thin lips. The eyes are not yet in the Gupta style. Similarly the hair is wavy and thin as distinguished from the prolific coiffure with ringlets of the Gupta sculptural tradition; fingers are simply treated. Since we do not have any other specimen of this category from this region, the importance of the present figure cannot be minimized.

Let us turn to the Gupta centres in Varanasi. Of course the main city was on the Ganga, in the district which is known as Rajghat, but Varanasi had certain other religious centres, the *tīrthas* sprinkled in and out of the present city of Varanasi. Most of these have been documented in the Purāṇas, especially in the *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*. Many of these were revived with the advent of the Gupta period. There must have existed a Vaishnavite temple of considerable dimensions overlooking the present Grand Trunk Road, or at the northern edge of the ancient city of Varanasi. Huge mounds covered with Muslim monuments confine within their wombs uncharted treasures of ancient sculpure and architectural fragments. Even to-day a casual look on the ruins shows multilated fragmentary sculpture and architectural members ranging from the Gupta period to the twelfth century, scattered over the surface. This complex is on the cross road where two national highways met in ancient times, an appropriate point to expect such monuments there. A colossal image of Govardhana-dhārī Krishna (BKB, acc. No. 147, see below) was discovered from this site.

The present Mān Mandir and Daśāśvamedha Ghāt must have been another important centre of religious significance, since the early Gupta period onwards. This strip extended to the Maṇikarṇika Ghāt. About forty years back a friend pointed out to me a panel of medium size, showing a *nāga* worship scene. This was in the early Gupta style, studded in the outer wall of the Goenka Pāthaśālā at Mir Ghāt, but now lost. However, a Hindu Temple of considerable stature stood somewhere between the present Mān Mandir Ghāt and the Daśāśvamedha Ghāt. This is evident from an almost life size female figure (see below) discovered in the past century from the foundations of the Mān Mandir Ghāt. This key figure is now in the Archaeological Museum, Rajasthan State, Jaipur. Moreover we find a *gavākṣa* half buried in the sand at the base of the Kālī temple on the banks of the Daśāśvamedha Ghāt. This contains a life size human head .... subsequently recut, (perhaps in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries, yet the *gavākṣa* itself retains its original Gupta character) and indicates existence of a huge temple at this site.

A third centre of Brahminical images was discovered at the present Rājmandir Ghāt. My father discovered the famous image of Kārtikeya now in the Kala Bhavan collection (BKB, acc. No. 156). The Tilabhāṇḍeśvara temple in the Bhelupur district of the city, has a few early pieces including at least one colossal figure of Śiva now studded on a pedestal under a tree, in a corner of the temple (fig. 1 etc., see below).

Not far from this area was a Buddhist centre, which is presently known as Muṛkaṭṭā Bīr area; this Bīr figure is originally a Buddha torso. Two Gupta style Buddha figures were discoverd by Shri Brindavana C. Bhattacharya in a garden of this locality; these figures are now in Bharat Kala Bhavan (BKB, acc. No. 148 etc.). They represent the Gupta style of the middle and late fifth century and are quite similar in character to their Sarnath counter-parts.

Similarly, within the present city limits, a number of other religious centres existed on the Pañchkrośī Road which encircled the city, used as its circumambulatory road. Many of these shrines figure in *Kāśī Khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa* and should have been there in the late Gupta period. My father collected some images from them which are now in the Kala Bhavan, yet none of them of the Gupta style. A temple called Mokṣeśvara on this road, a few miles beyond the well known Kandwā Temple has some Gupta fragments studded on its outer walls. A Gaṇa frieze discovered by my father of the Gupta period has been published by Dr. Donald Stadtner.[1]

The above description was aimed at suggesting that a number of centres other than the famous Sarnath, existed in the old city of Varanasi or on its periphery, Being a place of high importance for the Hindu world one can easily anticipate here a good deal of temple building activity in the early Gupta period. With this background, I propose to take up a few examples of the fourth and fifth centuries outside the Sarnath tradition.

(1) A panel showing a boy (possibly Krishna) stealing butter (BKB, acc. no. 180; ht, 52 cm.). This was published by Shri R. C. Agrawal and was dated in the sixth century.[2] He further informs that this theme could be related to Krishna's life and though not known so far from Mathura, was available from Maṇdor. He calls this a good examble of the Gupta style. However, Sri Agrawal has not specified such characteristics which could help attributing it to the sixth century.[3]

---

[1] Dr. Donald M. Stadtner, "A Gupta Frieze from Kandava", *Chhavi-2*, Banaras, 1981, pp. 187-188, Figs. 437-39.

[2] R. C. Agrawal, "Brahminical Sculpture from Bharat Kala Bhavan", *Chhavi-1*, Banaras, 1972, p. 174, fig. 338.

[3] The Kala Bhavan sculpture gallery has this on show, where it is attributed to the sixth century and Mathura is given as its provenance. Actually this was found in the city of Banaras by the celebrated Hindi poet, Sri Jai Shankar 'Prasad' who presented it to my father. The buff sand stone is distinct from the Sikri stone of the Mathura school of sculpture and is indistinguishable from its Chunar type commonly used in the Banaras/Sarnath school. Thus we have no reason to assume that this is a Mathura piece.

My father always felt that this panel belonged to the third century. Possibly the relationship found by present curators of this Museum between this panel and the Mathura School also goes in the same direction except that it differs substantially in dating.

The panel represents a woman (possibly Yaśodā) churning milk, a boy with 'wig' type hair has thrust his hand into the pot; two milk-maids, carrying milk or *dahī* in the background. Possibly this is a panel from a wall of a temple.

The physiognomy of the women, with their round and full bosoms, narrow waist and broad hip, reminds us of the Kushan traditions, although to some extent loosened here. The face is full with typical 'naive' smile, characteristic of sculptures from early centuries of the Christian era. The eyes are elongated and take ovaloid 'lotus bud' form; this alongwith the cursory treatment of palms and fingers or taut modelling of flesh, lack of *bhaṅgimā* in the figures, the Kushan type well 'brushed up' hair of the women—all taken together go in favour of my father's dating, which is late Kushan. Yet with the introduction of Gupta type coiffure of the baby, we might date it in the early fourth century A.D. Thus, this particular piece represents one of the rare instances of the transitional phase of early Gupta sculpture in Varanasi; there is no reason why this should not be so, as early Gupta style is already set on the coins of Samudragupta, under whose patronage Bhāgavata Vaishnavism must have revived in centres like Varanasi. In turn fresh temples could be expected to have been built in this city.

(2) A Standing Female Figure (fig. 2): As noted above, this figure was discovered at the foot of the Mān Mandir Ghāt and was shifted to the Archaeological Museum, Jaipur where it is preserved.[4] This was displayed in the Amer Museum (acc. no. 4052) for some time. This life size sculpture is almost complete except its ankles missing. Unfortunately the lower half was eroded, possibly that it was buried in the mud (the lower part of the *gavākṣa* face found nearby is similarly eroded). Thus we cannot discuss the treatment of her loosely falling *dhotī*, whether it had the characteristic Gupta-type pleats. The Gupta tradition is quite obvious in the diaphanous treatment of the cloth as a whole, including the *choli*-like upper garment, the simple ornaments or the thick lower lip, elongated ear-lobes and so on. Thus there cannot be any doubt that this is a Gupta piece. Yet one cannot miss the Kushan characteristics in the example; for instance the physiognomy is of earlier tradition with heavy bosoms, broad and sloping hips, to some extent fleshy thighs, projected private part (although not nude as in typical Kushan images), the straight *patkā*-like cloth falling straight in the middle, the

---

[4] This is published here by the courtesy of Sri R. C. Agrawal, Director Archaeology and Museums, Rajasthan State, Jaipur. The photograph is also published through their courtesy.

slightly heavy ornaments etc. The wide open eyes and the tightly brushed up hair on the head are the most characteristic features of the Kushan tradition. So is the slightly tilted head. Perhaps she was holding a bunch of flowers or corn in her left hand; this is known from a small patch on the exergue, its flattened and stylized treatment which is reminiscent of the earlier Kushan prototypes, although much more stylized in the present instance. Thus we can place this remarkable sculpture in the first or second quarter of the fourth century.

The total effect of this image is a bold yet simple expression, which is characteristic of early Eastern Indian style.

(3) The Govardhana-dhārī Krishna : This colossal image (BKB. acc. No. 147, ht. 212 cm.) was discovered under a muslim grave, at Bakariyākuṇḍa (on the Grand Trunk Road; see above)[5] : This image had generally been dated by the scholars in the fifth century.[6] The present writer can take the credit of suggesting an earlier date viz. the late fourth century A. D. Although there is a marginal distinction between these two dates, say at the best of fifty years or two generations, yet this is of immense value to us. Very few instances of late fourth century Gupta sculpture are known from the Gangetic region, yet there is no reason why this school could not be flourishing here.[7] We have already discussed some fourth century sculpture from Varanasi above.

---

[5] Sri V. N. Mehta I. C. S., the then Collector of Banaras, moved in and rescued this image with great endeavours. This was kept in the "Brahmanical shed" of the Archaeological Museum, Sarnath for years. Finally it was gifted by the Archaeological Survey of India to Bharat Kala Bhavan in the 1940s, when the arms of this image were clumsily restored.

[6] R. C. Agrawal, "Brahminical Sculptures from Bharat Kala Bhavan", *Chhavi*-1, op. cit., pp. 173-4, fig. 337.

[7] The Devnimori *stūpa* and its Buddha figures are dateable ca. 375 A. D., *vide* R. N. Mehta, *Excavations at Devnimori*, Baroda, 1966, pp. 28-29.

Sri R. C. Sharma in his paper, "Gupta Sculpture from Mathura" presented at the *International Seminar on Culture of the Gupta Age* held at Bharat Kala Bhavan in December 1980 (p. 29), discussed a Buddha sculpture found from Govindnagar, Mathura. This image is now with the Archaeological Survey of India. On stylistic grounds, Sri Sharma has ascribed this to very early Gupta period (early fourth century A. D.), since he feels that it shares characteristics with another Buddha image from Mathura (no. B10 of the State Museum, Mathura, *ibid.*, pp. 7-8), dated in the year 230 of an unspecified era. Earlier scholars had equated the date with the Gupta Era; therefore, they had put this in 549 A. D. Sri Sharma has rightly pointed out the early features of this image

Again, this image suggests a colossal Vishnu temple at the present Bakariya Kund site. The sheer size of the 'Govardhan-dhārī' (as my father called it) is impressive (212 cm. at its highest with the calf and feet missing; 150 cm. at its broadest including the restored arms and the hill). Hardly any other Gupta image of these dimensions has been found except colossal images at Udayagiri (Bhelsa)[8], but they are rockcut. These simply suggest that the concept of large scale images was not lost at least in the early Gupta period.

This sculpture shows the boy Krishna upholding the Mount Govardhana (the myth is that he protected his men and cows from the downpour of monsoon, as a wrath of Indra against the people of Vraja). The mountain is reduced to a few slabs of brick-like formation, enlivened with zig-zag scratches of the Gupta type. They were more formalized and deeper in the fifth-sixth century as seen in the panel 'Rāma conversing with Sugrīva,while monkeys bridge the sea' (ca. 475 A. D.) in the same collection. A later instance of more formalized rocks appears in the 'Nara Nārāyaṇa Tapaścaryā' panel at the Daśāvatār temple at Deogarh.

The physiognomy of the Govardhandhārī figure is also reminiscent of the late Kushan experience. The flat and broad chested body with the heavy and full

---

and therefore we can accept this as an early Gupta piece. However, it is an independent question if the above date may be reckoned to the Śaka Era, starting with 78 A. D., following his suggestion.

Now the main problem here is whether we accept Sri Sharma's contention that the above mentioned image from Govindnagar, Mathura, is an example in the local Mathura style or inspired by the Sarnath style, as has been suggested by other scholars. So far as the colour and type of stone used in the image is concerned this is found in rare cases of Mathura sculpture. However, it is closer to the Chunar sandstone, which was uniformly used in the Sarnath sculptures. But the crucial point is the stylistic content of the Govindnagar figure. The thin ovaloid face, the gentle flex, the plain treatment of *sanghati* and 'simpler' folds of its hem falling on the side and above all the medium-statured body totally differ with the "wooden" and long legs of the standing Buddha images of Mathura (with a heavy and fleshy face or the schematic treatment of his robes). Thus, even if this particular figure was produced at Mathura, this was based on an early Gupta figure from Sarnath, which is of immense value to our present investigation. Sequels to the *Bhikshu Bala* images at Sarnath show progression of this form, step by step, leading almost to the proper "Gupta" idiom.

8. Besides the well known figure of Mahāvarāha, some other sculptures were carved. These include a colossal *Śeṣaśāyī* figure, which is completely eroded by salt-action.

face of the god connects this image with the tradition found in the Varanasi region by the advent of the Friar Bala image dated in the third regnal year of Kanishka (I), at Sarnath. This tradition was carried on in that school.

This process of evolution of the Varanasi version of the Kushan-Mathura style is evident from two standing Buddha figures from the same site. It is thus interesting to follow the continuation of that particular style in this Krishna image. The undeveloped features of his face, alongwith the 'naive' smile, however, here is more meaningful, since these two factors convey the feeling of a boyish face with a fleshy visage and gentle looks. This is highlightened by the half closed eyes of the boy-god, yet the eye type differs from the conventionalised Gupta order; the eye-lids are very softly treated, and one cannot miss a benign look. Deep grooves at the end of the lips cut into the cheeks can be another survival of the late Kushan tradition. Unfortunately the face is slightly rubbed and therefore we are restricted to just a few details. Thus the laid down principles were reinterpretated by the early Gupta sculptors.

Treatment of the halo of the Govardhandhārī figure is also indicative of an early date, as suggested here. It is a relatively small and plain disc, which is closer to the Gandharan type than the Gupta variety. Neither does it conform to the scalloped edged Kushan style halo.

The fleshy treatment of the body—following the Kushan traditions—has been modified with subtler modellings, as would be anticipated in the urbane character of the Gupta art. These can be seen in the fine carving of the abdomen. The fingers and the palms are fleshy, free from the laid down principles of the high Gupta type. This again would suggest an early level of the Gupta sculpture, with greater amount of flexibility. Here such thick palm and fingers are meaningful as they go in accordance with the baby-like character of Krishna. Similarly the joints of knees or the bony projection of the legs are well carved. Such instances are rare in the fifth-sixth centuries. Like any other Gupta sculpture, the use of *bhaṅgimā* is meaningful in the present image. The figure is slightly bent, as if under the strenuous load of the mountain; otherwise the concept of a *līlā* ('sportive act') is conveyed by the facial expression. Actually, the gentle *bhaṅgimā* attributes a lyrical quality to the figure;[9] the idea here is to express some degree of movement in the scene, Krishna is shown with his left arm akimbo, a motif which is present in the Suratgarh terracotta plaque and was carried on to the Sri Nathji image (ca. fourteenth century, now at Nathdwara; unfortunately the feet of our image are missing, otherwise their positioning was also worth checking). The Nathdwara image has a similar *bhaṅgimā.* This posture attributes grace to the subtle *bhaṅgimā* which is the nerve-line of the Kala Bhavan image. Accordingly the fleshy abdomen is slightly tilted; the idea is accentuated with the three folds of flesh *(trivalī)* on the side.

---

[9] Slightly early in date is a terracotta panel from Sūratgarh (Bikaner) now in the Bikaner Museum; see in H. Goetz, *Art and Architecture of Bikaner State*, Oxford, 1950, page 26, fig.5. The Sūratgarh panels have obvious late Gāndhāra influence. This alongwith the Kala Bhavan image are the rare early representations of this theme in Indian art (the Mathura Museum stone slab is post Gupta and we cannot agree with Anand K. Coomaraswamy, *History af Indian*

We find two diversified treatments of cloth in this figure : the scarf (a symbol of a *gopā*) is twisted to form a bold mass with suggestive rope pattern, and is used as girdle (as if Krishna girdled up to perform the miracle). But it is in the refined treatment of the *dhotī* that the sculptor has excelled which sharply contrasts with the ridge-like effect of *saṁghātī* in Mathura Buddha figures. Here the upper end is slightly upturned and the diaphanous quality of the fine Varanasi muslin is shown with gentle rhythm of a wavy pattern across the *dhotī*. Similarly the hem of the *dhotī* has been delicately upturned at a few points and the gentle wavy folds of the *dhotī* show gradual release of tension in its rhythmic waves through successive changes in its patternization. These are suddenly disturbed with the impact of the folded scarf on the *dhotī.*

Two iconographic features enhance the concept of Bāla Krishna : the *śikhaṇḍa* type of coiffure and a pair of tiger-nails over the chest. The ringlet ends of Krishna's locks falling over the shoulders are fine examples of the Gupta sculptor's unending quest for this abstracted design. Each descends with a specific treatment, the tension starting from the ringlets, releasing itself in slow and gradual movement.

(4) A head and bust of Śiva (ca. 400 A. D., BKB, acc. No. 23946).

This Ekamukha Śivaliṅgam was discovered at Rajghat by the Krishnamurty Trust (Rajghat, Varanasi) who donated this to the Museum. This is again an early piece and noted for its creative handling of the theme; the rawness and ascetic character of Śiva is conveyed by the strong handling of the *jaṭā* and inebriete staring eyes. The expression is of a presence.

As an early feature, the bust is merely suggested by the undulating planes on the chest.

(5) No account of Varanasi school of sculpture can be complete without a reference to the famous Kārtikeya figure (acc. no. 156) in the Kala Bhavan collection. Since this piece has been frequently published and handled by most important scho-

---

and Indonesian Art, New York, 1955, p. 235, where he has assigned this image to the third century A. D., a suggestion which is now given up.

The interesting point in this connection is that in all the four instances of Govardhandhārī images discussed here, it is Krishna's flat palm which raises the mountain and not his small finger as the myth is usually related.

lars of Indian Art, I would discuss it in brief and simply as a sculpture. I place it in the height of the Gupta tradition, ca. 425-450 A. D. The boyish character of Kumāra is well expressed yet the sculptor was not supposed to attribute a 'naive' character to the concept of Kumāra, who is the 'commander-in-chief of divine army'. The long, ovaloid, staring eyes have a penetreting look and also the slightly projecting chest accentuates the marshal character of the god. This is even more pronounced in the 'Peacock' type of Kumaragupta I gold coins, a protrudence which was called for in that instance possibly to suggest the velocity with which his *vāhana*, the peacock was transporting him. The peacock in the Kala Bhavan figure pecks seeds of a pomgranate. The beak, head and neck of the bird are finely carved and well modelled. However, the toes of the god are cursorily carved and unduly elongated. One of the major attractions of this image are the fanned wings of the *vāhana* ('vehicle'), the peacock raises his tail as if in a state of ecstacy (this is also found in the above mentioned coins of Kumaragupta I). Here the plumes assume a vegetal form and radiate in the background, so as to provide a beautiful halo to the god.

The sides of the main figure and of the *Śakti* are roughly carved where one finds diagonal hatches This is a special treatment and possibly is purposeful like the *patraja* shading recommended by the *Citrasūtra* of the *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara Purāṇa* to express modelling.

This piece is a gem of the Gupta style sculpture.

(6) A Seated Figure of Mātrikā:

This over life size figure which is at present placed against a wall at Harishchandra Ghāt can be dated in late fourth century A. D. All the four arms are broken from the elbow and crude palms are carved by a recent folk sculptor; the figure is heavily coated with green oil paint. Part of the face is also recut. Still one can see the original ears with dangling huge ear rings, a part of the coiffure, the finely picked out yet simple necklace and the armlets. These belong to the Gupta tradition and therefore help us in dating the figure, though the straight and narrow torso with enormous hips and bosoms are reminiscent of the Kushan tradition. The baby in her arm is badly mutilated and most of the lion-vehicle is gone. The figure has the vigour of the Ardoxo representations of the early Gupta coins.

Two important images are now in the Tilabhāṇḍeśvara temple, Varanasi.[10]

---

[10] These pieces are published here by the courtesy of the temple priests and my son Naval Krishna, who took the photos, despite adverse light etc., I knew about these and one *gaṇa* figure at Ḍauṇḍiyā Bīr locality in the vicinity from my father. Thus this whole complex represents a major religious centre in the early Gupta period.

These are two extremely significant productions of the local style of Varanasi, but unfortunately badly eroded.

(7) Dakṣiṇāmūrti Śiva :

This panel (figs. 3 A-C) is set in the proper right *rathikā* of the sanctum, in almost dark *pradakṣiṇapātha*, the details are gone; moreover, it is heavily covered with layers of white wash, restricting our vision still further.

As a whole this panel gives an impression of a matured Gupta school of ca. 475-500 A. D. I would club this image with the other (fig. 1) in which Gupta style is clearly visible. The Dakṣiṇāmūrti figure takes the normal iconography; moreover, the god is ithyphallic and had a complicated hand posture of exposition, in the Gupta tradition. However, much of this is lost. The matted hair which is depicted in the string pattern is also shown with sensitivity, yet heavily covered with lime, the fine edges are not visible. Physiognomy of this image takes the typical Gupta form and is comparable to the known Buddha pieces from the city itself (see below, No. 10) or from Sarnath. The attendant rishis, in the exergue, are shown bent gently in ecstasy. Fortunately the tree above is more or less intact, which has a sensitive treatment of *pīpal*-like leaves, its tender branches winding in different directions, where one cannot miss 'transformation of nature in art'. The foliage is slightly projecting out of the panel and gives an aura like effect.

(8) Head and torso of a colossal figure of Śiva[11] (figs. 1, A-C) which must have been twice the human size or even more. This sculpture is broken from the middle and the arms and the lower half are also missing. This is placed in the outer court of the temple under a tree. Unfortunately the face is badly eroded and perhaps recut in the medieval period—even those details are now lost. This might be due to the image falling oni ts face, moreover due to the traditional Hindu practice of applying sandal paste etc. on the face and washing it, as a part of the daily service. Fortunately some other details are preserved, like the *jaṭā-bhāra* (fig. 1 A), ending in fine ringlets, delicate rendering of jewelery (fig. 1 B), a spray of leaves in the *jaṭā*, etc. Despite loss of the facial details, this ranks among the most successful sculptures of the Gupta period.

---

[11] Sri Brindaban C. Bhattacharya has discussed this image as a Bodhisatva (vide "Benares Iconographical Notes", *Indian Images*, Calcutta, 1921, p. 68, which is reprinted from the *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society*, 1921, pp. 74-75. fig. 5). The illustration matches with our image at fig. 1 which undoubtedly is a standing Śiva figure. Sri Bhattacharya gives the height of this as above four feet and calculates the total height at ten feet. He also suggests that "the lower part of its body, a little below the waist, is under the ground."

(9) A standing figure of a Yaksha or gaṇa :

This was discovered by Shri Brindavan C. Bhattacharya[12] at Ḍauṇḍiyā Bīr temple, alongwith some other stray pieces. It is a standing figure of a pot bellied dwarf, with thick legs, which are broken from the ankles below. He raises his head and right arm with which he was holding some object, not clear from the illustration—perhaps a *chowrie*. In the left hand he holds a sack like purse. His entire expression is that of an attendent, as if looking with admiration to his master. This is a highly finished work, showing the Gupta style at its best; unfortunately the facial details are badly rubbed off. Fine treatment of the diaphanous *ardhoruka* (half bodice) or the short *dhotī* shows remarkable sensitivity. Ornamental handling of the elaborate necklace and the frills of the *dhotī* are examples of a developed sense of design of this master sculptor. Drooping but taut flesh of the abdomen has been well suggested. The *jaṭā* (matted locks) is boldly shown, taking a bold *āmalaka*-like form. Shri Bhattacharya rightly remarked : "The photograph seen from a little distance has the chance of being mistaken for one of an actual human being." This is simply one way to look at the sensitivity of this well modelled and finely carved sculpture, one of the highlights of the Gupta style sculpture. In this image he seems to be an attendant (*Śravaṇaka gaṇa*) to the Śiva statue now in the Tilabhāṇḍeśvara temple. Kubera looks up at the god.

Treatment of eyes, the broad modelling of the *jaṭā*, with eye-like sections but detailed study of the jewellery, in the present image correspond in quality with its counterpart in the Śiva figure.

(10) a, b, and c) Three standing figures of Buddha (BKS, acc. Nos. 693, 148, etc.) were also discovered from an adjoining area, now known as Murakattā Bīr; this name itself is derived from a Buddha torso (ca. 500 A.D.) which is popularly taken

---

[12] "Benares Iconographical Notes", *Journal of U. P. Historical Society*, p. 74, fig. 4; also Sri B. Bhattacharya, *Indian Images*, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-67, pl. XX, where it has been described as Kubera (size 3'. 4" X 1'. 2" or 100cm. X 35 cm.). However, he failed to connect this with the Śiva statue of the Tilabhāṇḍeśvara temple. Association of Kubera with Śiva has been fully discussed by Sara Schastok in her paper "The Sixth Century Kubera Image from Mandsor", *Chhavi-2*, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-108.

Kālidāsa in his *Meghadūta*, mentions Kubera as an associate of Śiva (2,10). Sri B. C. Bhattacharya has cited a stone sculpture from Mathura, having Gaṇeśa and Kubera together *(Indian Images, op. cit.*, pp. 29-30).

According to Dr. Brij Mohan Pandeya this stands for Śravaṇaka *gaṇa*, an attendent of Śiva; a tenth century counterpart of this *gaṇa* has been found by Dr. Pandeya at a Śiva temple in Bhojpur (Madhya Pradesh). This identification is acceptable in the present instance.

as the *Bīr*. Two other images were discovered from the same site by Shri B. C. Bhattacharya and were purchased by my father for Bharat Kala Bhavan.[13] They represent two different styles, perhaps being products of different ateliers or show to some degree difference in time. Since one of them it to some extent close to the typical Sarnath type we can ascribe it to the last quarter of the fifth century. The other shows a more mellow treatment and has a slightly shorter body, corresponding to the Govindnagar (Mathura) image. One might not be wrong if one places it in the second quarter of the fifth century.

(11) A passing reference to the Budhagupta period pillar (BKB, acc. No. 205) originally published by Shri A. C. Bandopadhyaya is also called for; this shows revival of the Gupta style not only at Sarnath, but also in the city of Varanasi in that monarch's region. The faces of the pillar have four niches, containing effigies of different aspects of Vishnu. A similar other inscribed, but undated pillar with effigies of the same nature and also found from Rajghat (Varanasi) is in this collection. These show a simplified version of the high tradition of the Gupta sculpture.

(12) A *gavākṣa* showing a figure of Śiva caressing Pārvatī (BKB, acc. No. 132), Gaṇeśa appears in a side niche. On the back side is a figure of Kārtikeya. This architectural piece was found in the house of Rai Krishnaji in Chowkhamba.

The Vishnu figures on the two pillars and also the figures on the above *gavākṣa* show mediocre and popular versions of the Gupta style in the city of Varanasi.

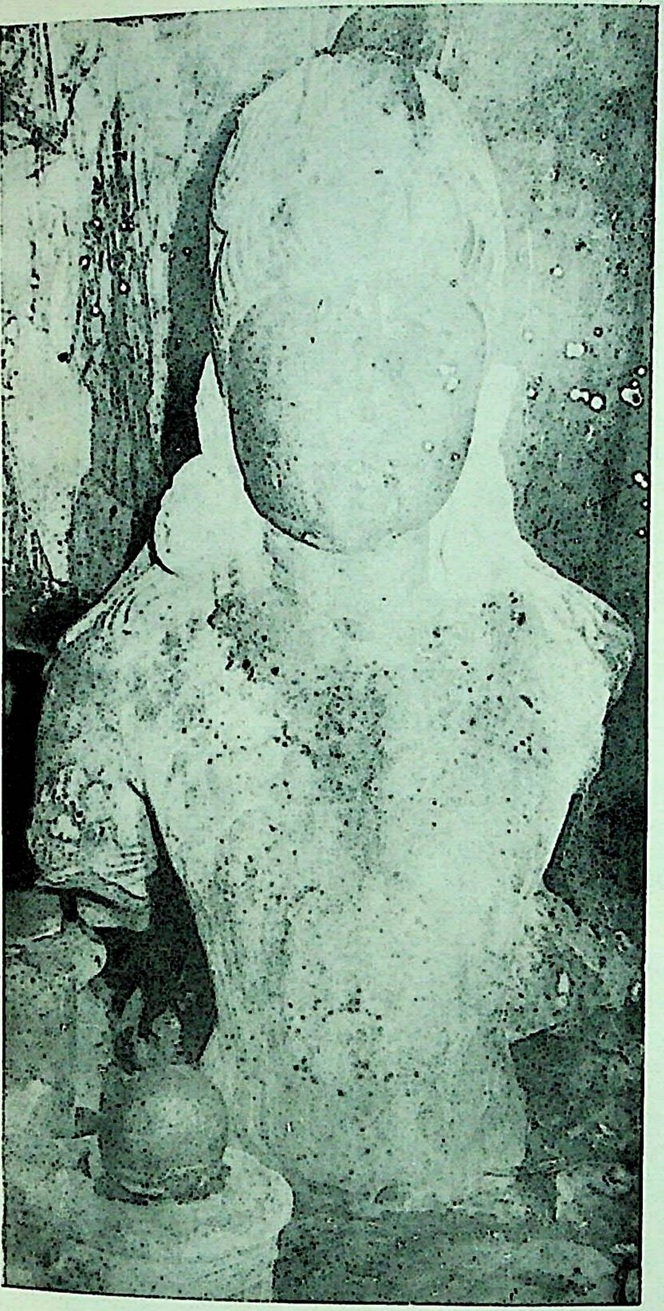
Perhaps this is the tip of the iceberg, which we see and nobody knows what treasures are lying buried in the mysterious wombs of Varanasi—awaiting the archaeologists' axe.[14]

With the above, I pay my homage to the memory of Dr. Miss Alice Boner.

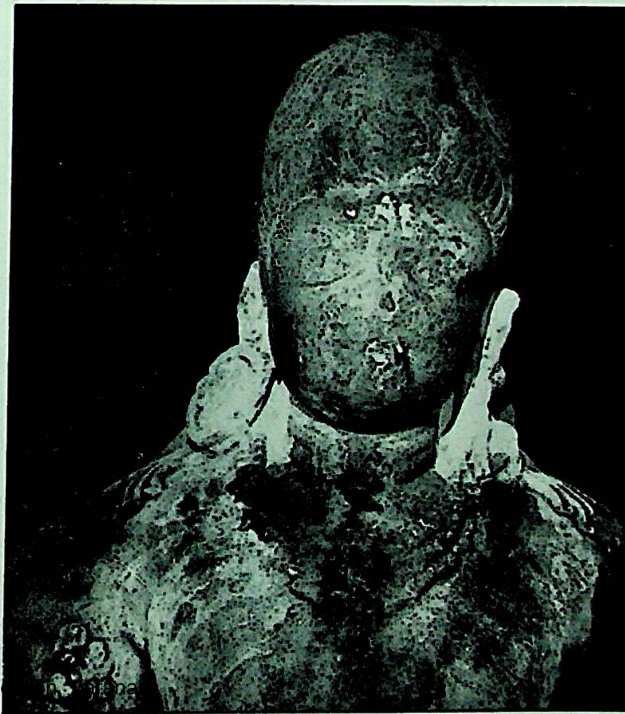
---

13. A fourth image of standing Buddha discovered in Narayanpur Village (on the back of the Uday Pratap College) by Dr. P. L. Gupta, who donated it to Bharat Kala Bhavan (acc. no. 693).

14. Several other Gupta pieces are known from the nearby villages; for example my father discovered a beautiful *gaṇa* frieze from the village Kandwā (see foot note no. 1). Certain architectural fragments were discovered by Mrs. Carol Lin-Bodien in a village near Sarnath.



1. Standing Śiva, Tilabhaṇḍeśvara Temple.

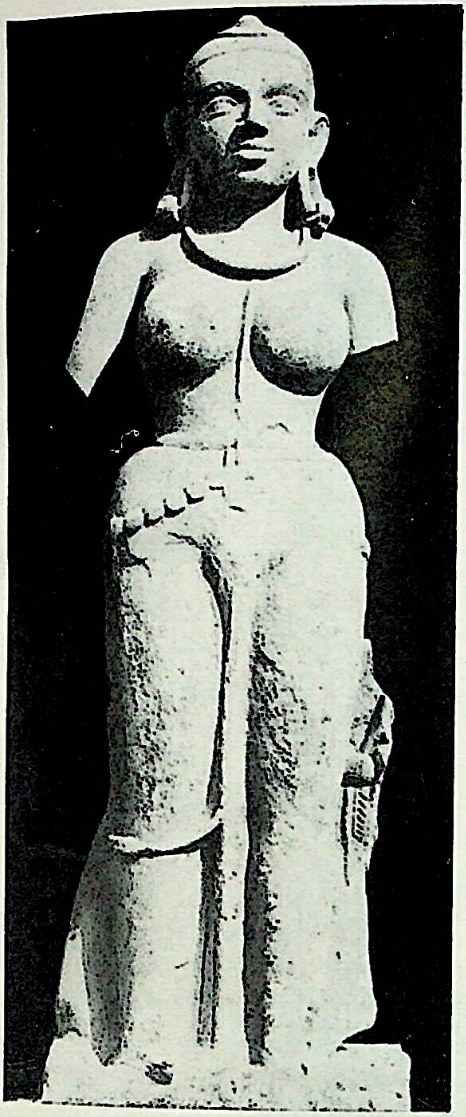


1A.

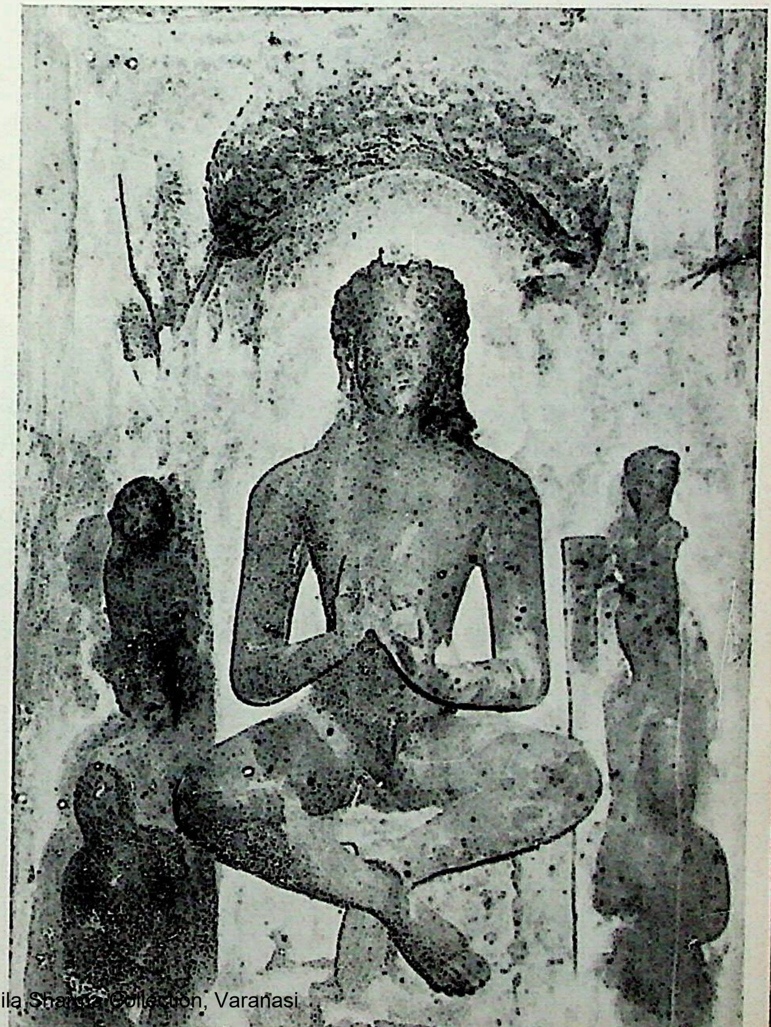
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

1B.

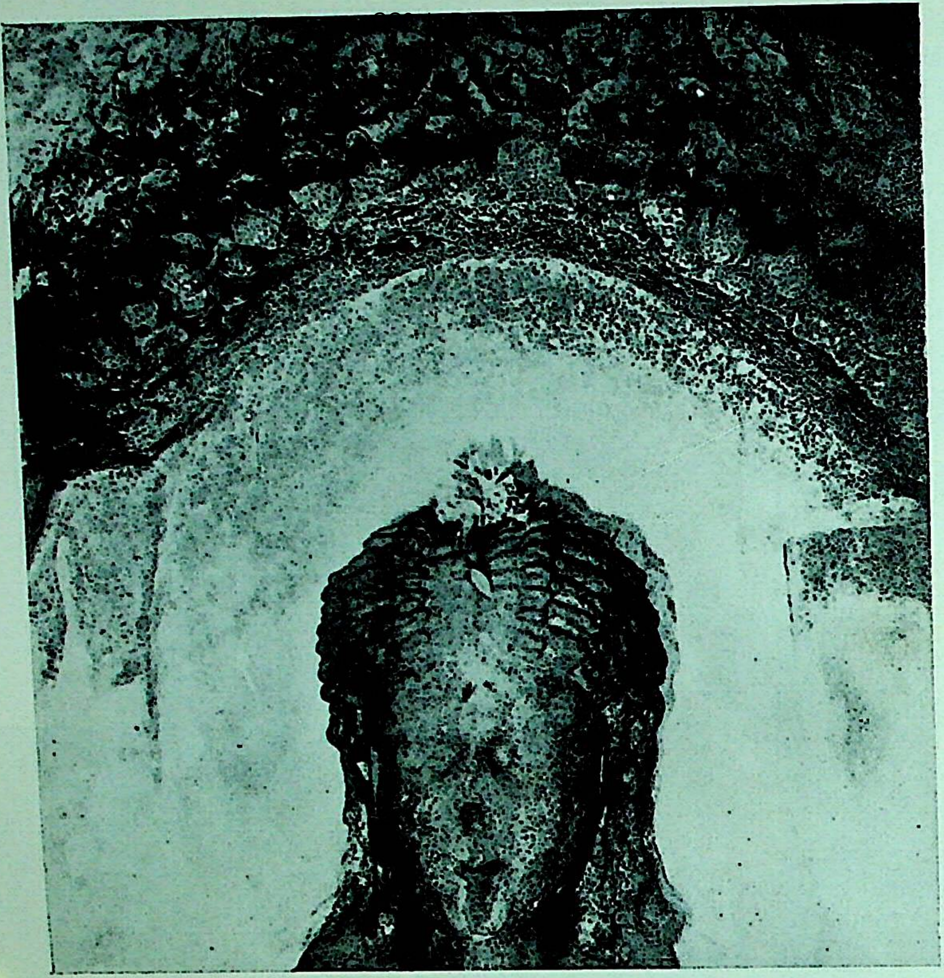
1C.



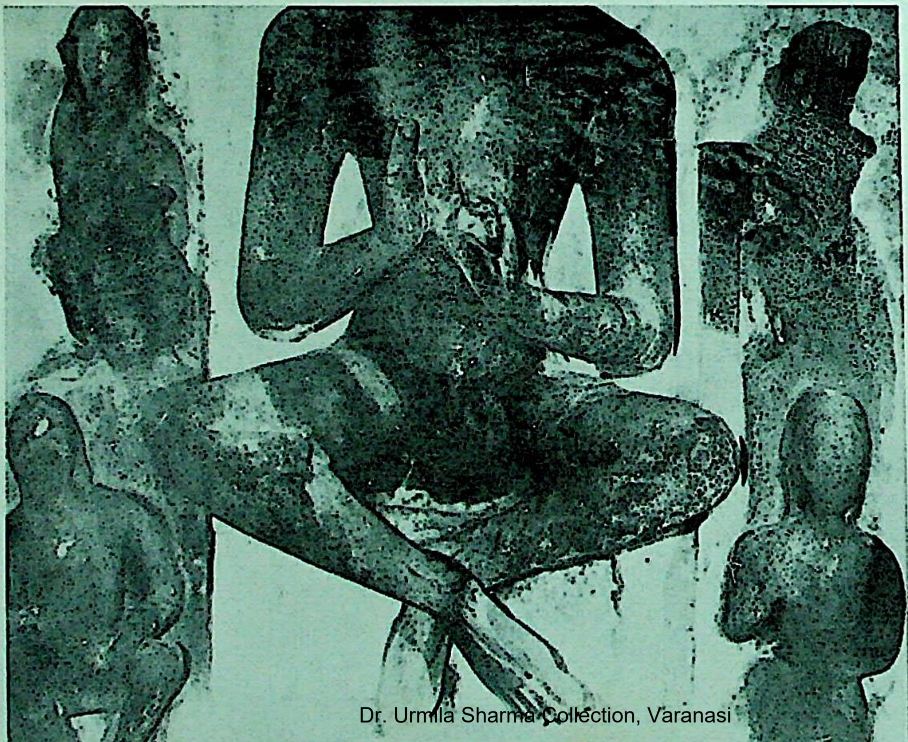
2. Yakṣī from Banaras. Museum Amber (Jaipur).



3A. Dakṣiṇāmūrti, Tilabhāṇḍeśvara Temple.



3B.



3C.

NĀGA IMAGES AND THE CULT OF MANASĀ IN ORISSAN ART

THOMAS DONALDSON

As in other parts of India, *nāga* worship in Orissa is very ancient and serpent images play a major role in the decorative program of the temple as well as serving as cult images placed within shrines or at the base of trees. As water gods, the subterranean counterpart of the celestial gods,[1] they are friendly spirits "who protect the temple against lightning and propitiate the Nāga-folk in the subterranean regions"[2] thus securing the temple solidly on its earth-foundations. As in the case of other auspicious motifs, they combine dual complementary aspects, i. e., they are both propitious and apotropaic. Characteristic of the *nāga*'s Soma character is its power to bestow fertility, to dispel sterility and to heal sickness. They are donors of prosperity and opulence, grantors of wishes, owners of treasures and at the same time the guardians of these treasures,[3] such as gems, precious metals and minerals which are to be found in the bosom of the earth. As water gods they naturally possess power over the element of water—rain, thunder, etc.,—while their serpent *chihna* or mark inspires fear and awe among humans towards them.[4]

Although there are no surviving temples which can be dated prior to the late 6th century, there are numerous large images, mostly *nāgas* and *yakṣas*, which have been tentatively dated to the 2nd or 3rd centuries A. D., found within a short distance of Bhubaneswar, testifying to the popularity of the cult at this time. Three of the *nāga* images, two *nāgīs* and a *nāga*, are now aligned in a row in a small hut at the southern outskirt of the village Sundarpāḍa, approximately two miles from Bhubaneswar. They are depicted standing and are in human form with a canopy of five serpent hoods above their head. There are also serpent coils carved on their sack. They vary in size between 53 inches and 68 inches in height. They are presently worshipped as village deities and are garmented with modern clothes.[5] There are two similar *nāga* images now housed in the Orissa State Museum, measu-

---

1. See Y. Krishan, "The Naga Cult in Indian Art and Literature," *Oriental Art*, Vol. XIII (1967), p. 191.
2. Alice Boner and Sadasiva Rath Sarma, trans., *Śilpa Prakāśa,* by Ramachandra Kaulacara (Leiden, 1966), p. XLIV.
3. F. D. K. Bosch, *The Golden Germ* (The Hague, 1960), pp. 136-37.
4. Y. Krishan, *op. cit.*, p. 191.
5. See S. C. De, "Three Ancient Naga Images from Bhubaneswar and Naga Cult in Orissa," *OHRJ*. Vol. 1 (1954), 1-5, pls. 1-4.

ring 471/2 inches in height, though they are damaged and badly worn.[6] Due to the large size of these images, and the fact they are carved on the back, they most likely served as cult images rather than forming an element in the decorative program of a temple.

By the 7th century these standing *nāga* images give way to seated images who generally hold a vase with both hands in front of the chest. Of the surviving examples all are *nāgas*. Although the images are all detached they frequently bear sockets below their arms and clamp marks on their pedestals to indicate they were fixed to a structure[7]. The earliest image is the one placed next to the sanctum doorframe of the Svarṇajāleśvara temple. Stylistically the image is closely related to the images on the temple and thus can be dated to the opening years of the 7th century (fig. 1). Unfortunately the lower part of the image is missing so it is not clear if the image was standing or seated. Its coiffure is arranged in corkscrew curls which rise up at the top and cascade down to the shoulders on either side of the face. A canopy of seven serpent hoods forms a nimbus behind its head. It is possible that there was one of these images placed on either side of the entrance as a guardian figure. This is supported by the existence of a *nāga*, badly damaged and small in size, on one side of the north *rāhā* niche, the niches on these early temples simulating doorways, while the opposite side is now obliterated but probably had a similar image. Only the head and a canopy of five serpent hoods of the *nāga* remain intact.

Similar *nāga* figures, datable to the 8th and 9th centuries, appear in the *jagamohana* of the Vaitāl Deul, two in miniature shrines on the west side of the Mukteśvara compound, and a badly worn example at Kualo.[8] The example in the Vaitāl Deul, placed next to the sanctum doorframe, is well preserved. The *nāga* is seated in *padmāsana* with legs crossed and holds a *ghaṭa* with both hands in front of his chest. He is richly ornamented and his coiffure is arranged in a *karaṇḍa-mukuṭa* with cork-screw curls aligned in two tiers but none cascade down the sides of the face as on the Svarṇajāleśvara image. His head is framed by a canopy of seven serpent hoods (fig. 2). In the best preserved example in the Mukteśvara compound, probably from the early temple replaced by the nearby Siddheśvara temple at a later date, the *nāga*, carved from the waist up, holds a large *ghaṭa* in a similar manner

---

6. Krishna C. Panigrahi, *Archaeological Remains at Bhubaneswar*, Calcutta, (1961), p. 21, fig. 2.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
8. Similar *nāga* figures are arranged on the roof of the Madhukeśvara *jagamohana* at Mukhaliṅgam, along with a larger one in front of the *rāhā* niche on the north side of the *deul*, though these serve as gargoyles rather than cult images and thus are excluded from this paper.

and is likewise richly ornamented.[9] The coiffure is also arranged in a *karaṇḍa-mukuṭa* with two tiers of curls while additional curls cascade down to the shoulders. A tiara is worn at the base of the coiffure and a canopy of seven serpent hoods frames the head. In the example at Kualo, placed next to the entrance of the collapsed *jagamohana*, the *nāga* is seated in *padmāsana* with a *ghaṭa* held in front of the chest but all of the surface details are worn away. For the most part, influenced by Buddhist traditions current in the Assia hills area, these seated *nāga* figures are replaced by smaller standing *nāga* figures who are incorporated into the decoration of the doorframe as attendants to the *dvārapālas*, as on the Śiśireśvara temple at Bhubaneswar, the Dakhineśvara Śiva temple at Badgaon, the Siṁhanātha temple and on the later Vārāhī temple at Chaurasi. Beginning in the 10th century, on the other hand, and probably influenced by the earlier tradition of placing a large *nāga* on either side of the entrance, *nāga/nāgī-stambhas* are introduced on either side of the *gavākṣa* windows as well as the entrance portal of the *jagamohana*. In contrast to the earlier seated images, however, the *nāga* (on the proper right) and the *nāgī* (on the left) are serpentine from the waist down with their tail coiling around the *stambha* (pillar).

The earliest surviving examples of *nāgas* housed in niches of the temple, thus testifying to their sanctity, appear on the Śiśireśvara and Vaitāl Deul, both dating to the second half of the 8th century. On the Śiśireśvara temple the image is housed on the south side of the *jagamohana* next to an image of Lakulīśa while in the Vaitāl Deul the image is housed in the sanctum along with the *Saptamātṛikās* and other Brahmanical deities. Both images have been identified as Amoghasiddhi, considered as the fifth *Dhyānī* Buddha by the Nepalese Buddhists, by Panigrahi.[10] Although there is a certain amount of Buddhist influence in the iconography of numerous images on the Śiśireśvara, there is nothing in these two images to indicate they represent Amoghasiddhi. The Amoghasiddhi from Udayagiri in Ganjam district (in the Orissa State Museum), for example, is seated in *padmāsana* on a lotus cushion in front of a serpent which rises up to form a canopy of seven serpent hoods above his head. His hands are placed on his lap in *dhyāna-mudrā* with the right over the left rather than displaying *abhaya-mudrā* as described in the texts.[11] He is bereft of body ornamentation while in the center of the pedestal is a Sāranātha device of a wheel flanked by a deer on either side and a lion is carved at each corner (fig. 6). In the example on the Śiśireśvara, partly damaged, the figure is likewise seated in *padmāsana* with a nimbus of seven serpent hoods over his head. His hands are not placed in *dhyāna-mudrā*, however, but are held chest high with the right one holding

---

9. See Panigrahi, *op. cit.*, fig. 8.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39, 80-81.
11. See Benoytosh Bhattacharyya, *The Indian Buddhist Iconography* (Calcutta, 1968), pp. 55-56.

a rosary and the left one a small *ghaṭa* or vase (fig. 3). He is ornately bejewelled and wears a *yajñopavīta* formed of interlocking chainlinks. His coiffure is arranged in three tiers of tightly coiled curls on top of his head with additional cork-screw curls cascading down to his shoulders on either side of his face as on the other *nāga* figures already mentioned. In the image in the sanctum of the Vaitāl Deul the figure is seated in a similar pose on a *viśvapadma* cushion with a canopy of seven serpent hoods rising behind his back. His coiffure is likewise arranged in a *karaṇḍa-mukuṭa*, though without cascading curls, and he is also ornately bejewelled (fig. 5). His hands, placed just above his knees, again hold a rosary, though displaying *varada-mudrā*, and a *ghaṭa*. There is a small standing attendant on either side and a *vidyādhara* in each upper corner of the backslab. In the center of the pedestal is a large *pūrṇa-ghaṭa* overflowing with foliage while on each side is a tripod filled with offerings on the right and supporting a covered vessel on the left. In both casest he position of the hands, body ornamentation, coiffure and the *ghaṭa* suggest that the figures probably represent *nāgas*. *Nāga* worship, as indicated, was widespread throughout Orissa at this time and there are even two *nāgas* carved on the pedestal of Lakulīśa on the *jagamohana* of the Śiśireśvara temple.

There are also a few other examples of *nāga* figures housed in niches of Orissan temples, including one, holding a *ghaṭa* in front of his chest with both hands, in a *caitya* design on the brick Paṭāleśvara temple at Budhikomna in the upper Mahānādī valley dating to the end of the 9th century. The image is badly worn but a canopy of five serpent hoods is clearly visible behind his head. The other *caityas*[12] on the temple contain mostly displayed figures, male and female, exhibiting their sex organs. There is also a seated, bearded and pot-bellied male figure at Pedagadi who is exhibiting his large *liṅgam* and has a canopy of fourteen serpent hoods behind his head. The serpent canopy, also popular on many later *dvārapāla* images, most likely reinforces the apotropaic nature of the image rather than identifying him as a *nāga*. A similar use appears on an image on the *jagamohana* of the Gaṅgeśvarī temple at Beyālisbaṭi where the canopy consists of nine serpent hoods. In this example the figure is seated in *lalitāsana* above a prostrate corpse and is four-armed. His major left hands a vase or *kapāla* in front of his chest while his corresponding right hand is uplifted and brandishes a sword. The back hands are mostly obliterated, Also in a niche on the *jagamohana* of the Gaṅgeśvarī temple, dating to the 13th century, is a *nāga* seated in *padmāsana* with a canopy of five serpent hoods behind his head. His hands are placeed in front of his chest though it is not clear what they are holding, being mostly obliterated. The most interesting aspect is the placement of seven jars of *nidhi* on his pedestal, a feature which stresses his chtonic nature and his control over earthly treasures (fig. 4).

---

[12] Following Chattisgarh traditions, images are placed in the *caityas* rather than in the *pāga* niches which are small and underdeveloped.

A rare example of a *nāginī* appearing in a major niche is on the northeast corner of the *jagamohana* of the Madhukeśvara temple at Mukhaliṅgam. She stands in a rigid *samabhaṅga* pose with a rosary and water jar in her right and left hands respectively. She is richly bejewelled and wears a heavy garment that hangs to her ankles. Her hair is arranged in a *karaṇḍa-mukuṭa* of tightly coiled curls with additional curls cascading down on either side of her face as in the case of her seated male counterparts discussed above. A canopy of seven serpent hoods forms a nimbus behind her head. A small attendant appears in each lower corner of the niche with the one on her left carrying a *ghaṭa* in both hands (fig. 11).

The most popular cult image is that of the *nāginī* Manasā, particularly known as the possessor of the Supreme Knowledge (*mahājñāna*) and for her power of counteracting poison, the Brahmanical counterpart of the Buddhist serpent-goddess Jāṅgulī, a daughter of the Śavaras or wild tribes of India, who likewise is a charmer of snakes and is invoked against snake bites.[13] According to a *stotra* in the *Brahmavaivartta-Purāṇa* (*Srī-kṛṣṇa-Janmakhaṇḍam*, ch. 51), Manasā is called the daughter of Śiva, a parentage upheld in popular Bengali ballads where it is recorded that she was fashioned from the seed of Śiva in the nether regions by an artisan employed by Vāsukī, the seed being placed on a lotus-leaf and travelling through the stem to the place of Vāsukī. Elsewhere in the same text (*Prakṛti-khaṇḍam*, ch. 42), she is described as the mind-born of Kaśyapa but the spiritual daughter of Śiva, the latter giving her Supreme Knowledge.[14] Contrary to the opinion of P. K. Maity[15], the cult of Manasā was popular in Orissa as evident by numerous images which can be tentatively identified as Manasā. In a badly-worn image of Vateśvara, detached and placed on a modern pedestal along with an image of Āstikajaratkāru, Manasā is seated in *padmāsana* and holds a vase in her left hand while her right hand, held in a similar position above her thigh, is mostly obliterated. A canopy of seven serpent hoods appears behind her head (fig. 7). On the Rāmeśvara temple at Jāṅgalaveri, near Panichhatra, an image of Manasā serves as the *pārśva-devatā* in the north *rāhā* niche while in the Rāmeśvara compound at Tola her image is housed in a modern shrine where she is worshipped as Marchikei. There is also an image, worshipped as Vilashuni, housed in a thatched cottage near Kantapara. All three of these sites are located in the Prācī valley.[16] One of the most impressive images is the one enshrined in a small temple on the outskirts of Bhilligram, near Bhillideuli, where she is worshipped as Jagulei. She is seated in *padmāsana* and holds a *ghaṭa* in front of her chest with both hands. A canopy of seven serpent hoods rises behind her back. The upper part of the image is badly worn from *pūjā* rituals (fig. 8).

---

[13] Nalini K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum* (Varanasi, 1972), p. 221.

[14] *Ibid*., p. 220.

[15] Pradyot Kumar Maity, *Historical Studies in the Cult of the Goddess Manasa* (Calcutta, 1966), pp. 298-29[illegible].

[16] See P. K. Ray, *Prachi Valley* (Bhubaneswar, 1975), pp. 15, 19.

There are also two images, possibly representing *nāginīs*, placed in the reconstructed Chaṇḍī temple at Kenduli in the Prācī valley, each seated in *paryaṅka* with the right leg resting on the left above a *viśvapadma* cushion and having a canopy of seven serpent hoods rising behind their head. They are beautifully carved in chlorite with exquisite details and well-proportioned bodies in keeping with the best examples of the lath 11th or early 12th century. One, placed in the *jagamohana* is worshipped as Ambālikā. She is richly ornamented and her coiffure, arranged in a large chignon on top of her head, is studded with jewels. Her right hand holds a stalk with a cluster of seeds at the end while her left hand, broken at the wrist, rests on her knee and holds a lotus which blossoms near her shoulder. A *vidyādharāṇī* is carved on each upper corner of the backslab. The pedestal is decorated with lotus rhizomes and two kneeling figures who appear on the right. The base of the pedestal is left uncarved except for two diminutive kneeling figures on the left (fig. 9). The second image, placed in the sanctum, is worshipped as Ambā. She is similarly ornamented and her coiffure is likewise fastened with jewelled chains above her tiara. Her right hand, now missing below the elbow, originally held a stalk of mango blossoms which are still intact near her shoulder. The left hand holds a lotus as on the previous image. The upper part of the pedestal is likewise decorated with lotus rhizomes along with two kneeling devotees on the proper right. A lion is additionally added on the left. The base of the pedestal is decorated with a frieze containing musicians, female dancers and devotees with one of the latter represented crawling on hands and knees (fig. 10).

In addition to images of Manasā seated in *padmāsana* with a vase in her hands, there is a more popular version in which she is seated in *lalitāsana* with a boy or man on her lap. In this form she is generally identified with Jaratkāru, the sister of the Nāga king Vāsukī, and the boy on her lap is identified as her son Āstika. There are many such images in Orissa, ranging from the 9th to the 13th centuries, including examples at Shergarh, Siṁhanātha, Paikapāḍa, Tundara, Vateśvara, Bhillideuli, Kenduli, Someśvara (Kākaṭpur), Adasapur, Daraba, Khilor, Pitapara, Māntri, Budhapāḍa, Kapila Muni Ashram, Niali, Jāṅgalaveri, Mudgala-Mādhava (Siddheśvara), Garuḍipañchana, Ajodhya, Doma-gandara and in the Orissa State Museum. One of the earliest examples appears on the lintel above the niche housing the Bhikṣāṭanamūrti on the south side of the *jagamohana* at Siṁhanātha, dating to the last half of the 9th century. The lintel is divided into three compartments with Manasā, or Jaratkāru, occupying the center compartment. She is seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus cushion and holds a serpent on her lap, an iconographic feature found on many images from Bengal where her cult was particularly popular.[17] There is no canopy of serpent hoods over her head, however, probably due to the restricted amount of space in the narrow compartment. In each side compartment are two female figures approaching Manasā/Jaratkāru, each holding a serpent in their hands. In the badly damaged image at Vateśvara, the goddess is seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus cushion and holds a small child on her left thigh in the manner of a *mātṛikā*. Her face and the canopy of serpent hoods are mostly obliterated. She is flanked on either side by a *nāgī*, possibly Neto and Kālī, who are seated with legs crossed. There is a small kneeling figure on the pedestal worshipping an indistinct object next to a small vase (fig. 12). In an image from Tundara,[18] Jaratkāru is seated in *lalitāsana* with the child Āstika seated on her left thigh. She holds a serpent in her right hand and a canopy of seven serpent hoods frames her head so that there are eight serpents as prescribed in the standard *Dhyāna* recited in the worship of Manasā.[19] Kneeling devotees appear on the pedestal along with a large vessel.

In the detached example in the Mahiṣamardinī temple at Shergarh, dating to the late 9th century, it is not possible to determine if the figure on her thigh is a child or a serpent as it is mostly obliterated. Manasā/Jaratkāru is seated in *lalitāsana* on a *viśvapadma* cushion with her right hand resting on her knee, possibly holding a vase, and her head is framed by a canopy of serpent hoods. The image, probably from a destroyed shrine in the area, is loosely placed on top of a detached *graha* slab in the sanctum near an image of Mahiṣamardinī. In the two detached examples in the Patāleśvara compound at Paikapāḍa, also dating to the end of the 9th century, there is a slight change in the iconography of the motif which will be further developed on later images. In the first example, Manasā/Jaratkāru is seated in *lalitāsana* with her right hand resting on her thigh and holding an indistinct object, possibly a vase. Serpent coils are lightly etched on the backslab behind her while the serpent canopy is mostly obliterated. The figure seated on her left thigh, with legs hanging pendant, is no longer a child but a young boy (fig. 13). In the second example the serpent coils are eliminated and the canopy, if there was one, is obliterated. The right hand of Manasā/Jaratkāru now holds the legs of the boy who assumes a stiff, almost lifeless pose on her left thigh. There are three kneeling figures on the pedestal with the one on the proper right possibly holding a serpent (fig. 14).

---

17. See N.K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, pl. LXXIII (a), R.D. Banerji, *Eastern Indian School of Medieval Sculpture* (Delhi, 1933), pl. LXIV (b), and P.K. Maity, *op. cit.*, pls. 2-12.

1 . See Nagendranath Vasu, *Archaeological Survey of Mayurabhanja* (Calcutta, 1912), fig. 13 (erroneously identified as Skanda-Sasthi).

19. N.K. Bhattasali, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-219.

This changing iconography is more pronounced on later images, dating primarily from the 11th through the 13th century, with the serpent canopy being eliminated, though a serpent is carved on the pedestal, and a tree being added above the head of Manasā/Jaratkāru. The figure on her lap is gradually transformed into a man who generally appears to be dead so that the identification of the motif as Astikajaratkāru is probably incorrect. It is most likely the power to heal the poisonous effects of snake-bites that is being stressed, i. e., the ability to revive the dead, so that the female figure is probably Manasā and the man on her lap, generally bearded and ornately bejewelled, could be one of the many men that she revived, such as Dhanvantari or Lakhindar. This healing aspect is further reinforced by the local priests who frequently identify the female figure as Sāvitrī reviving her husband (Satyavan). Although most of the surviving images are detached, they invariably are found in the compound of a Śaiva temple to suggest their close association with Śiva and testify to the religious synthesism prevalent throughout Orissa. That she was absorbed into the Brahmanical pantheon, and not just worshipped by low-cast or tribal peoples,[20] is proved by two images which are still *in situ* on Śaiva temples. In the first example, on the Khileśvara temple at Khilor dating to the end of the 11th century, her image appears on the upper part of the *sandhi-sthala* on the north side. In the corresponding niche on the south or sinister side is an emaciated Bhairava dancing on a corpse, a juxtaposition in keeping with the dual complementary symbolism dominating the decorative program of Orissan temples; the life-restoring qualities of Manasā counterbalancing the destructive aspect of Bhairava or Vāmadeva (fig. 17).[21] In the second example, on the Somanātha temple at Budhapāḍa dating to the late 13th century, the motif is housed in a niche on the north side of the back wall of the *jagamohana*. flanking the entrance to the sanctum, while the corresponding niche on the south side is filled with an image of Hara Pārvatī, a juxtaposition which further exemplifies the close association of Manasā with Śiva on Orissan temples [22]

---

[20] Some authors state that she was worshipped only by the aboriginals. See P.K. Maity, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-299.

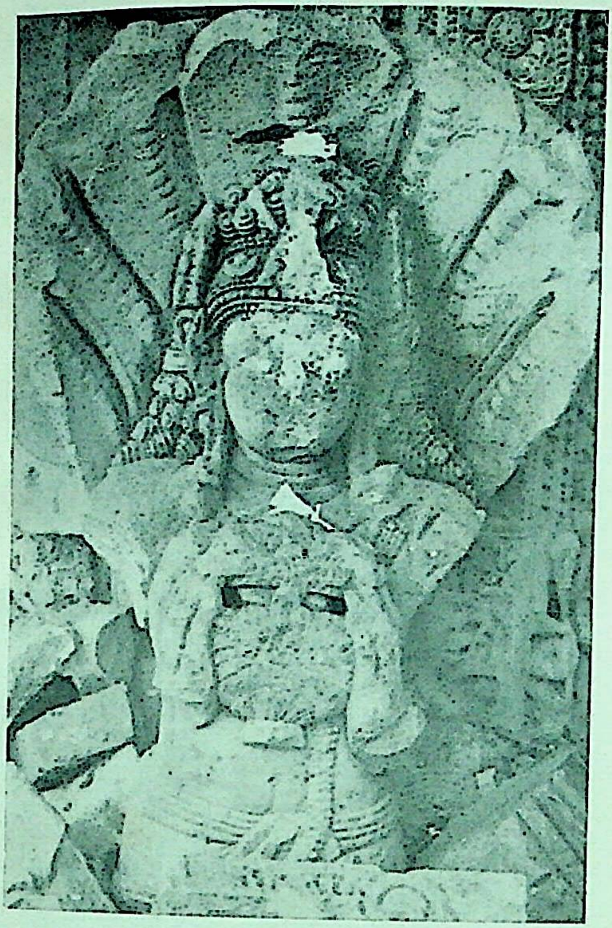
[21] A similar juxtaposition may have existed at Someśvara (Kākaṭpur), dating to the same period, where images of Manasā and Vāmadeva are now haphazardly inserted into niches of a reconstructed temple. For Vāmadeva see Boner and Sarma, *op. cit.*, pl. XLVII (b).

[22] Some stories hold that Manasā was both the daughter and wife of Śiva though Maity interprets their incestuous relationship as merely an expression of Śiva's licentious character. Manasā also revived Śiva after he drank the poison. See P.K. Maity, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-201.

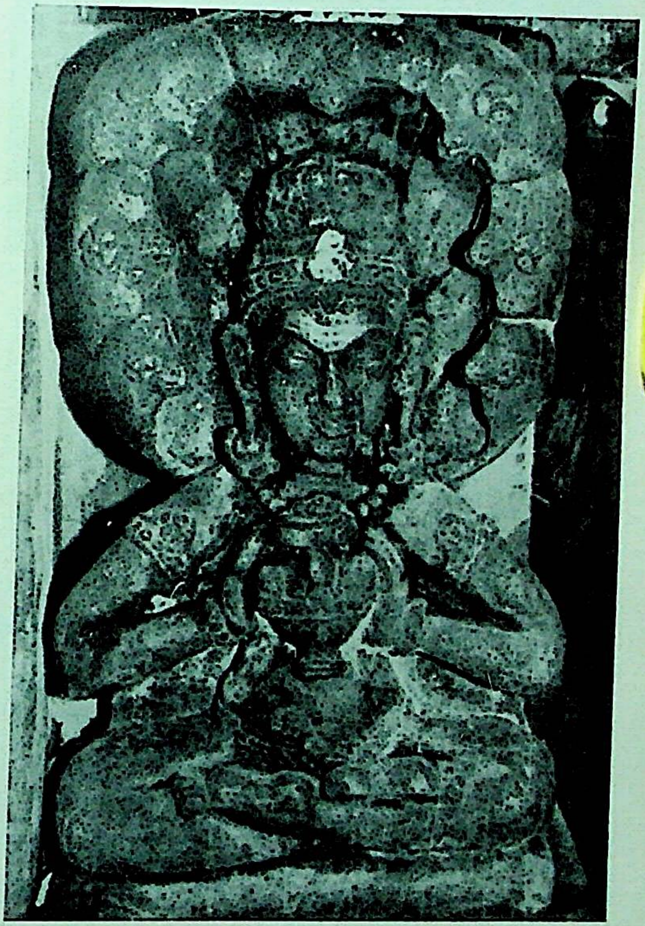
The Śākta nature of the motif is also evident on several images, as in the example in the Jayadeva Cultural Center at Kenduli where an emaciated figure with a *kapāla* is added on either side of the *Snuhi* tree spreading above Manasā (fig. 18). Manasā/Jaratkāru is seated in *lalitāsana* holding the rigid, full-grown man on her left thigh with her right hand holding his legs. The right arm of the male is lifted above his head suggesting he is just waking up or being revived. A kneeling figure worshipping a serpent is carved on the pedestal. This uplifted arm of the male figure appears on almost all of the images and is the only sign of life exhibited by him. At Adasapur, the detached image leaning against Svapneśvara temple, the arm is draped around the shoulders of Manasā/Jaratkāru. On the upper corner of the back-slab, beneath the branches of the *Snuhi* tree, are two figures. One has his hands in *añjalī* while the other points his backsides towards the serpent goddess. In most of these examples Manasā/Jaratkāru is ornately bejewelled and wears a tiara. In a few cases the *Snuhi* tree is replaced by a creeper which meanders up on the right of Manasā/Jaratkāru, as at Someśvara (Kākaṭpur) and Pitapara. At Someśvara the male, though bearded, does not appear to be full-grown. Although there is no serpent visible it may have been carved on the base of the pedestal which is covered up (fig. 15). The best-preserved example of the male figure is the image in the Orissa State Museum though the upper part of the backslab and the head of Manasā/ Jaratkāru is broken off (fig. 16).

The largest of these images is the one placed in a makeshift niche on the compound wall of the Kakharua Baidyanātha temple at Māntri (fig. 19). The male figure, with his right arm upraised, faces slightly down and away from Manasā/ Jaratkāru rather than looking at her in the conventional manner. She faces him, on the other hand, rather than looking outward as on most images. On either side of the *Snuhi* tree are figures and animals arranged in registers but they are too indistinct to identify, being partially splashed with whitewash. In addition to the serpent there is a lion carved on the pedestal. In one of the last examples of this motif, in the compound of the Angeśvara temple at Pitapara, dating to the 13th century, the male figure is lying prostrate on the lap of Manasā/Jaratkāru with his legs hanging limp from the knees down. Manasā cradles his head with her left hand while her right hand cradles his side and left arm. The trunk of the *Snuhi* tree meanders up on the right side of the backslab while on either side of the branches is an emaciated ascetic holding a *kartrī* and drinking from a *kapāla*, again suggesting the Śākta nature of the motif. A serpent and kneeling figure are carved on the pedestal (fig. 20).

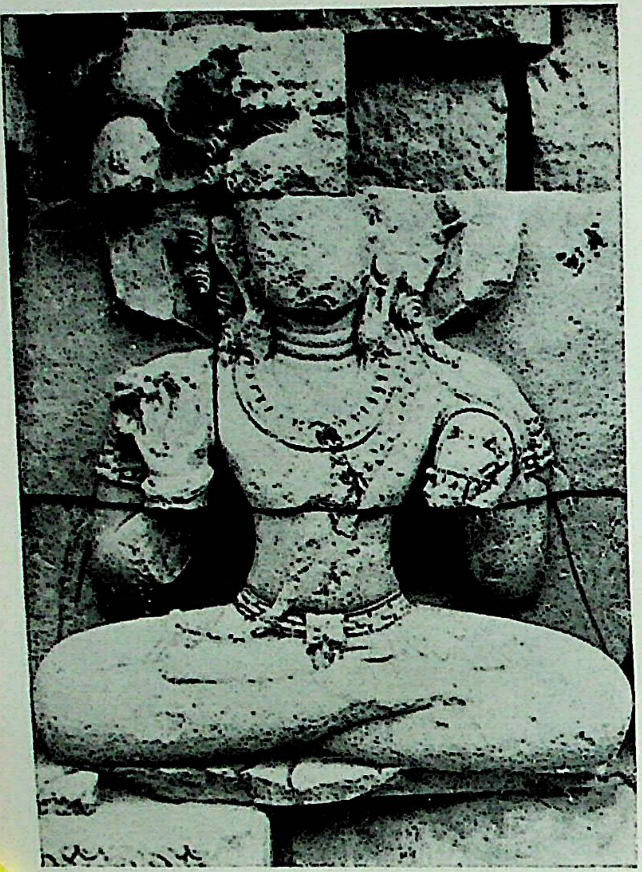
In summary, there are two iconographic forms of a serpent goddess, both possibly representing Manasā even though worshipped under different names at various locales, with the first example, deriving from early *nāga* figures placed at the entrance to a shrine, stressing her role as a donor of prosperity and opulence as well as a guardian of treasures. As in the case of *nāga* figures she is seated in *padmāsana* and holds a vase. In the second iconographic form, evolving in the 9th century and possibly influenced by the emerging popularity of the *Saptamātṛikā* cult, she probably represents Jaratkāru with her son Āstika. This *mātṛikā* aspect is short-lived, however, as the child on her lap is transformed into a full-grown man and emphasis is placed on her magical ability to counteract poison from serpent bites and to restore life to the deceased. Although her identity is only tentative, the *Snuhi* tree, the serpent on the pedestal and lifeless male on her lap suggest that she is probably Manasā. After the 13th century there are few, if any, surviving images, suggesting that the cult was no longer popular, at least in respect to royal patronage, probably because of the emerging popularity of Vaiṣṇavism and the gradual elevation of Jagannātha to the role of supreme deity throughout Orissa.



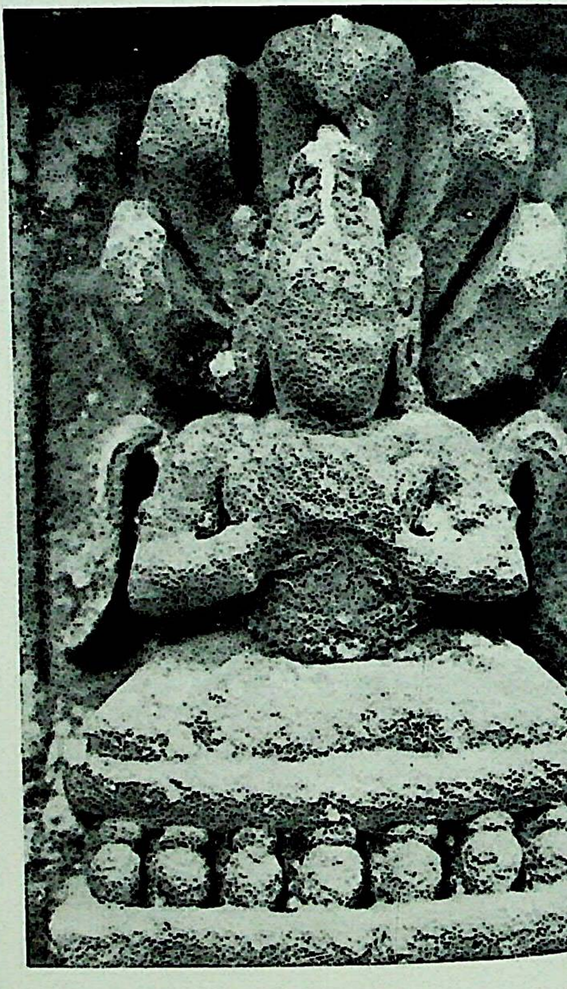
1. Svarṇajāleśvara temple; *nāga.*



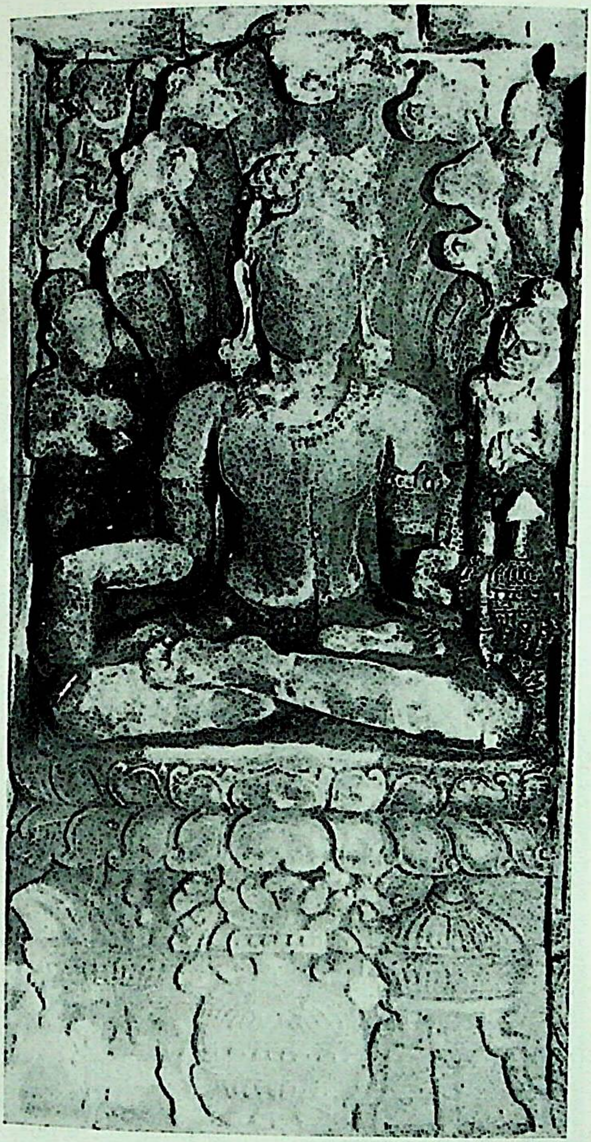
2. Vaitāl Deul; *nāga.*



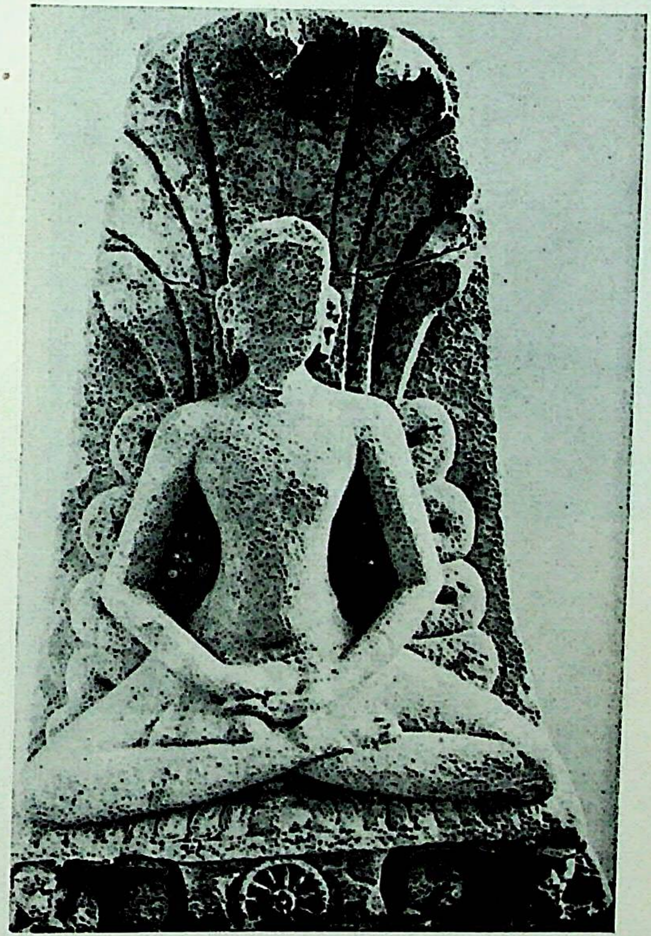
3. Śiśireśvara temple; *nāga*.



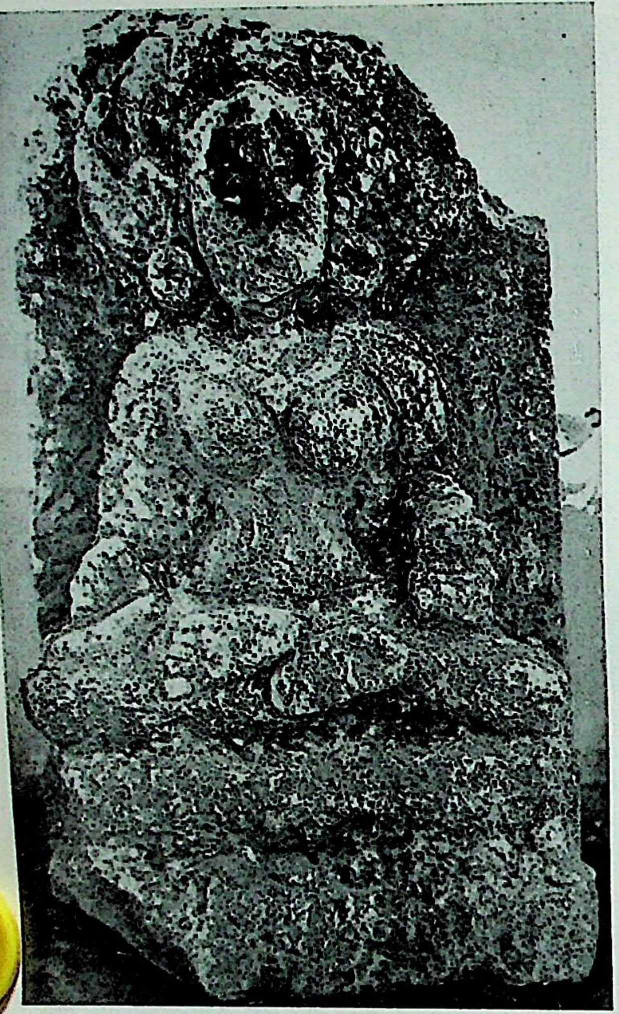
4. Beyālisbāti; Gaṅgeśvarī temple; *nāga* seated above *nidhi* jars.



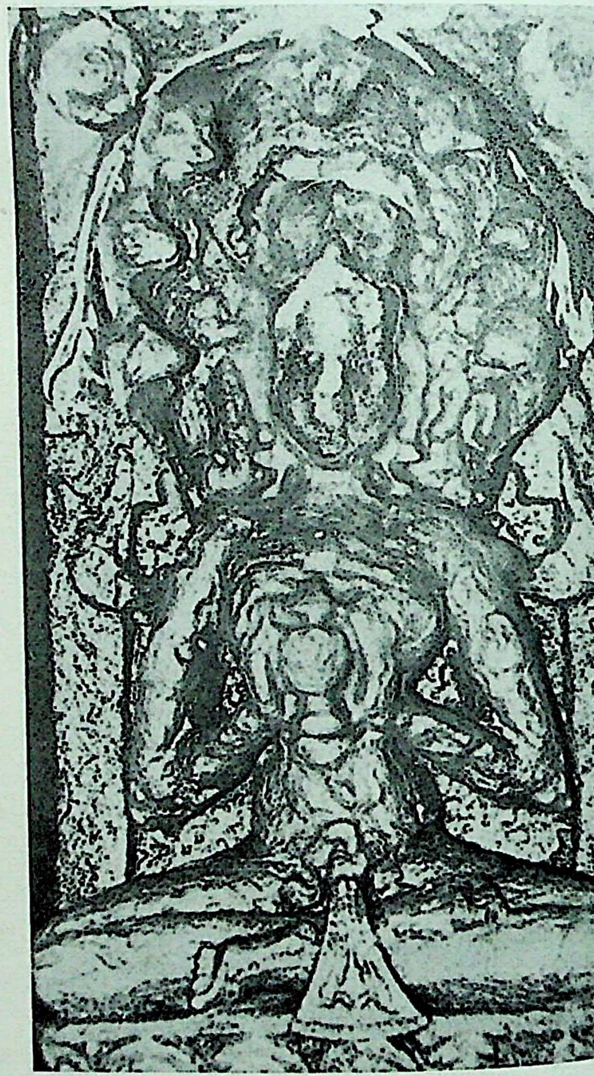
5. Vaitāl Deul; *nāga* in Sanctum.



6. Udayagiri (Ganjam); Amoghasiddhi (Orissa State Museum).

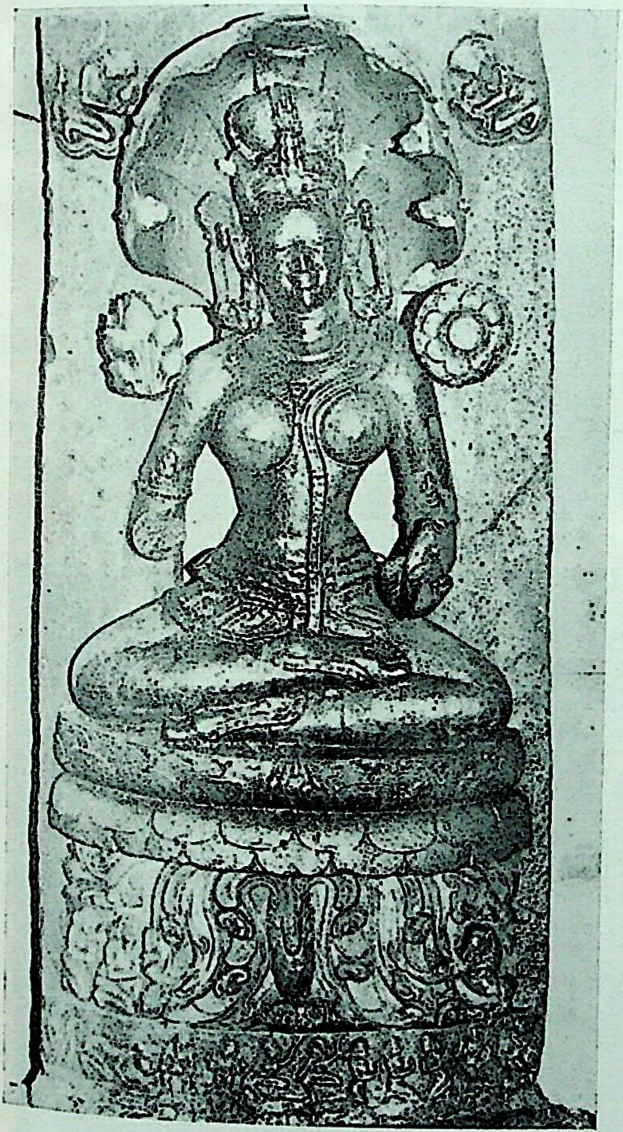


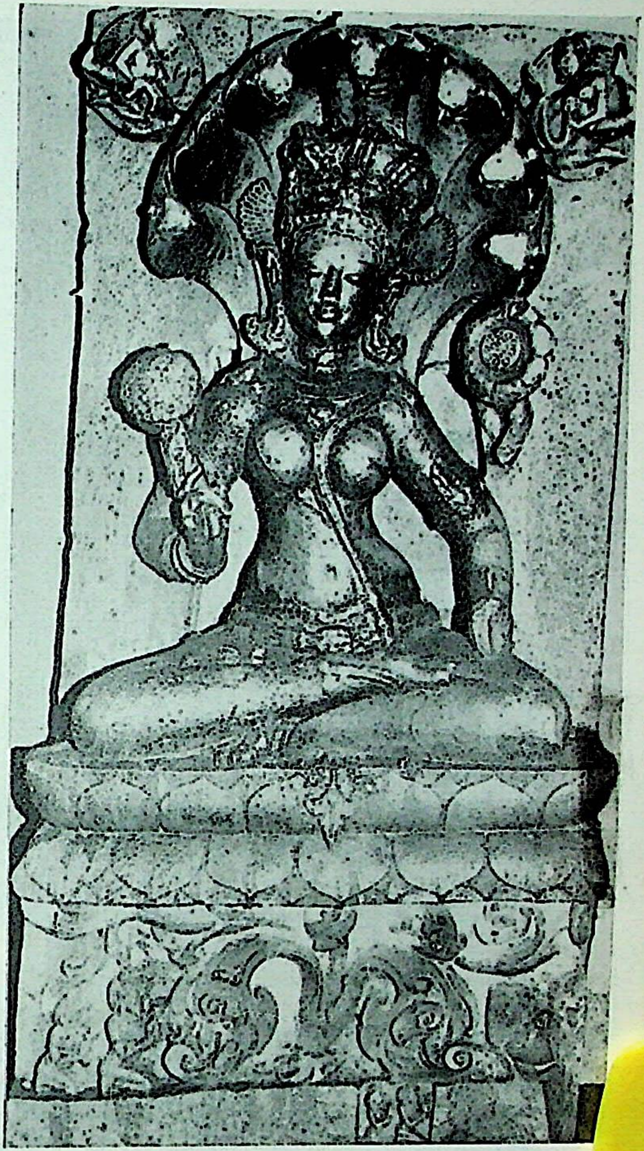
7. Vateśvara Compound; Manasā.



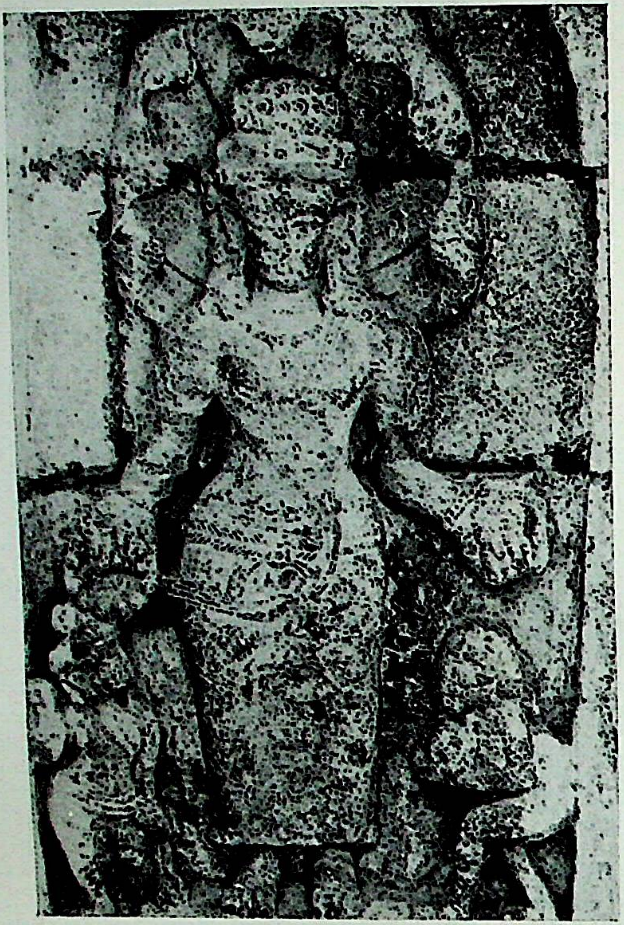
8. Bhilligram; Jagulei temple; Manasā.

9. Kenduli: Chaṇḍī temple; Ambālikā.

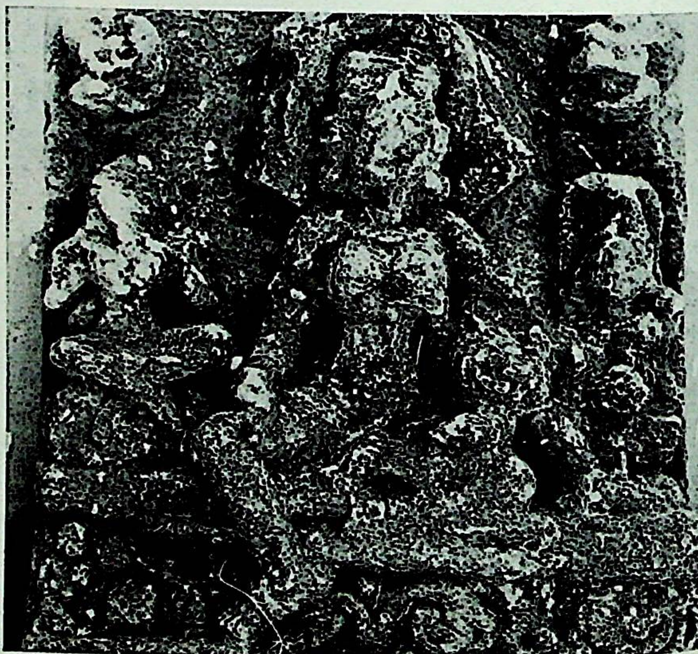




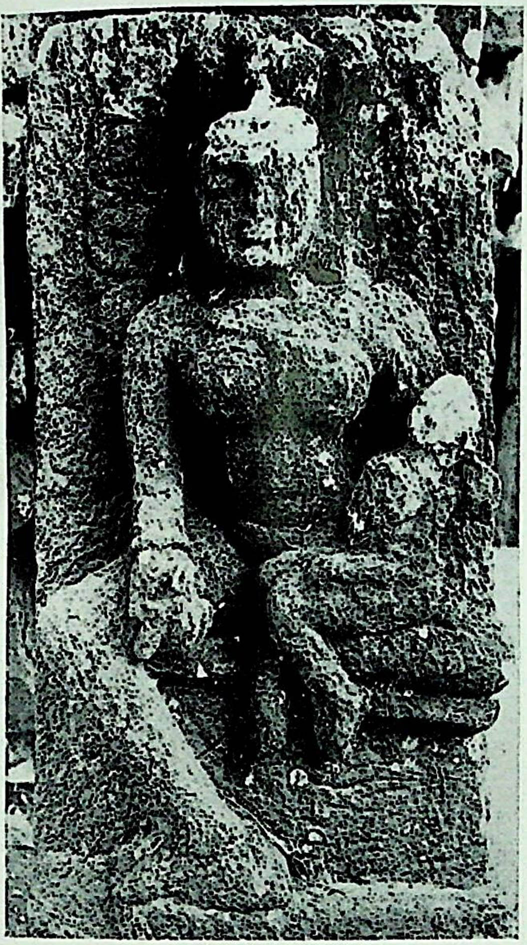
10. Kenduli; Chaṇḍī temple; Ambā.



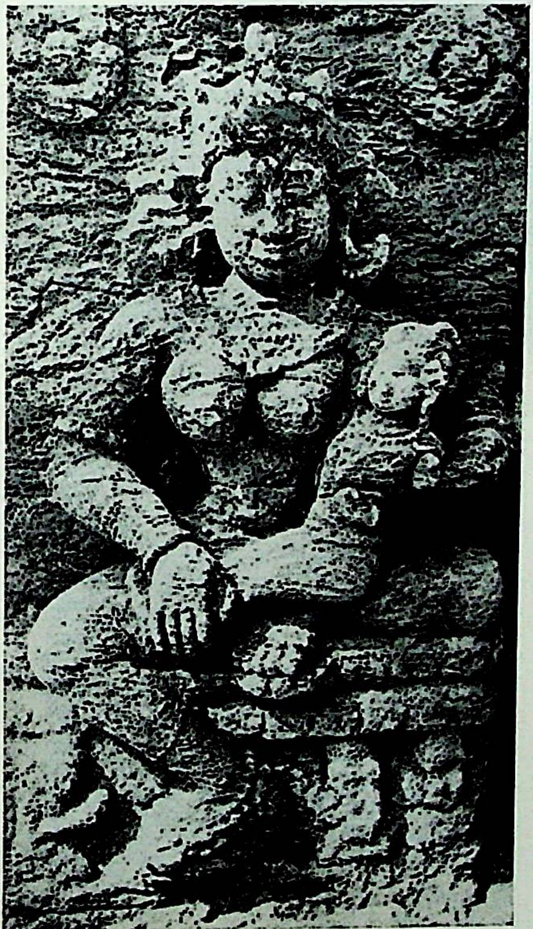
11. Mukhaliṅgam; Madhukeśvara temple; standing *nāginī*.



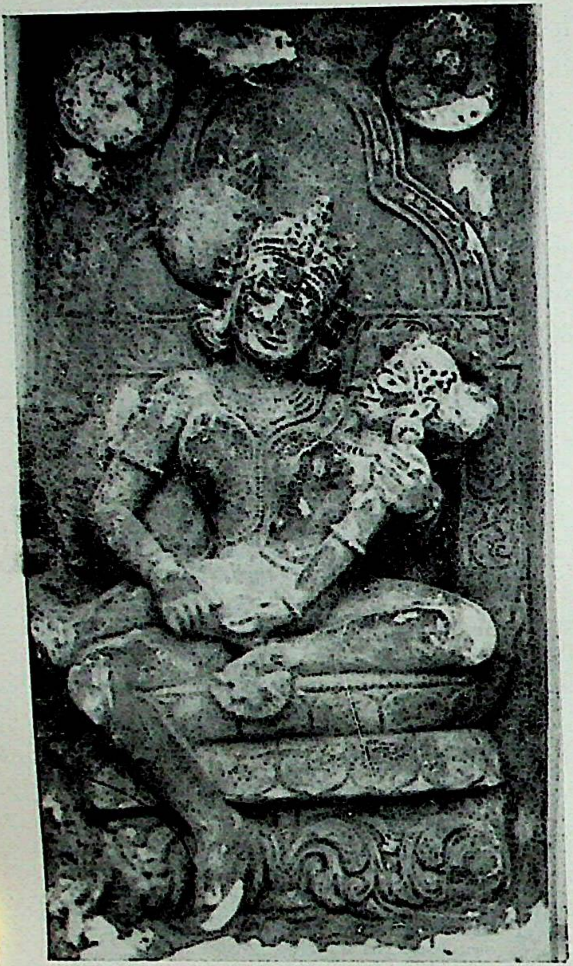
12. Vateśvara Compound; Āstikajaratkāru.



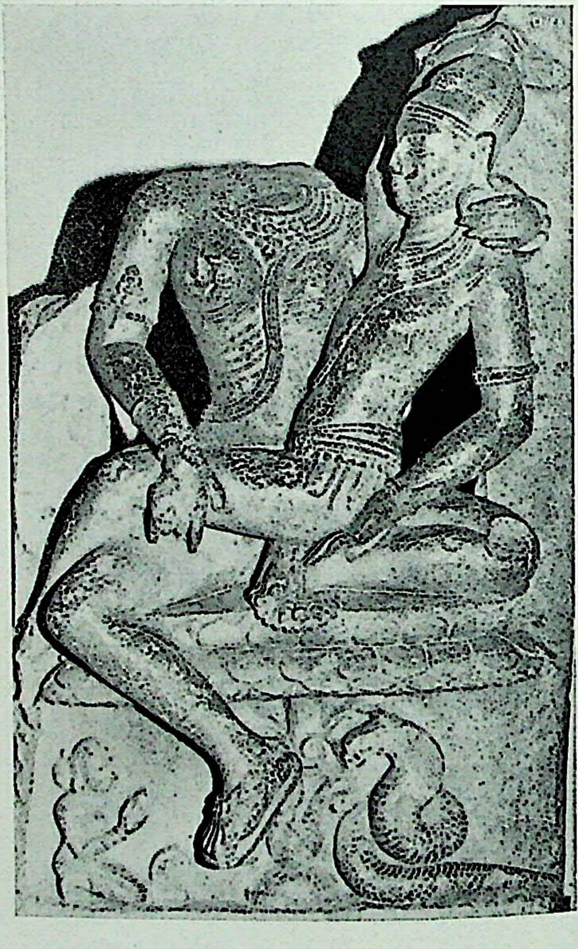
13. Paikapāḍa; Āstikajaratkāru.



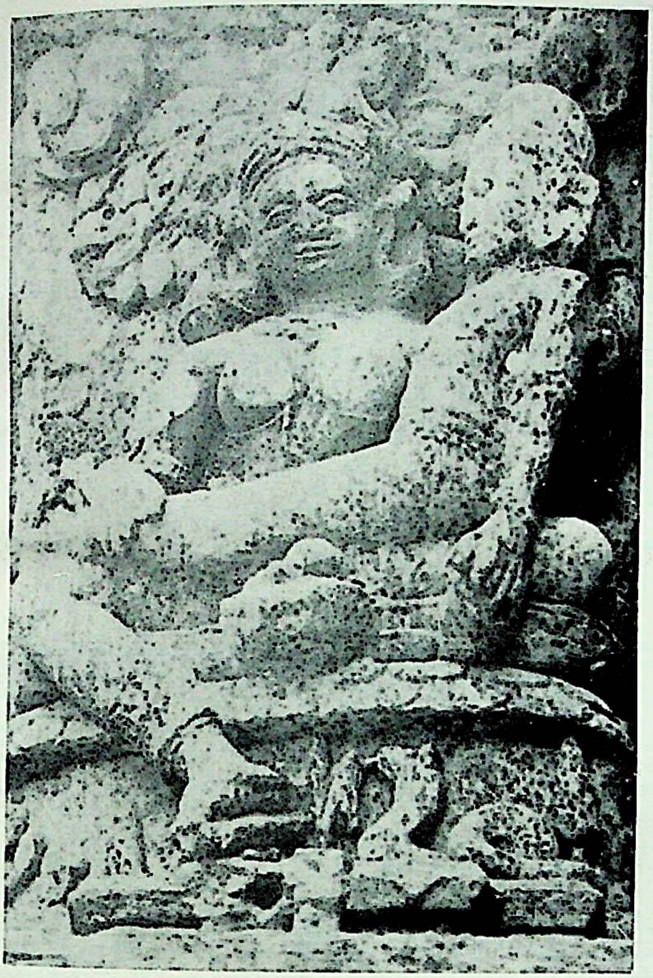
14. Paikapāḍa: Āstikajaratkāru.



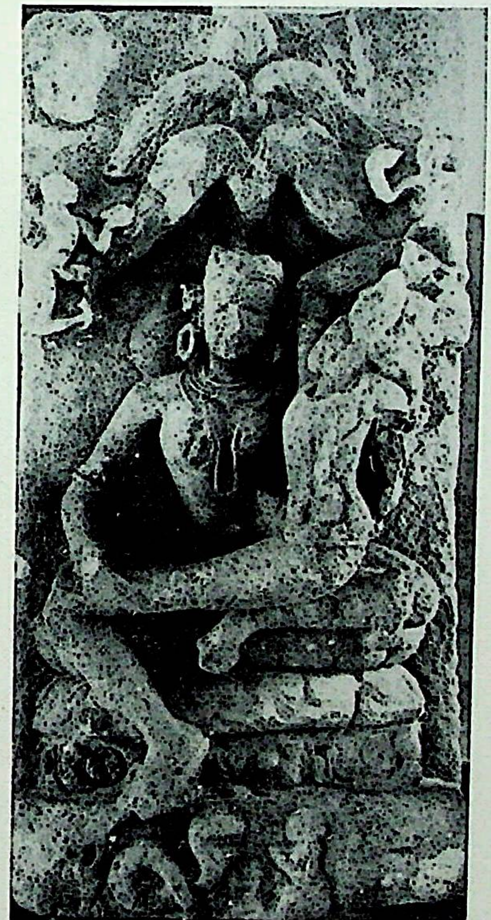
15. Someśvara; Manasā/Jaratkāru.



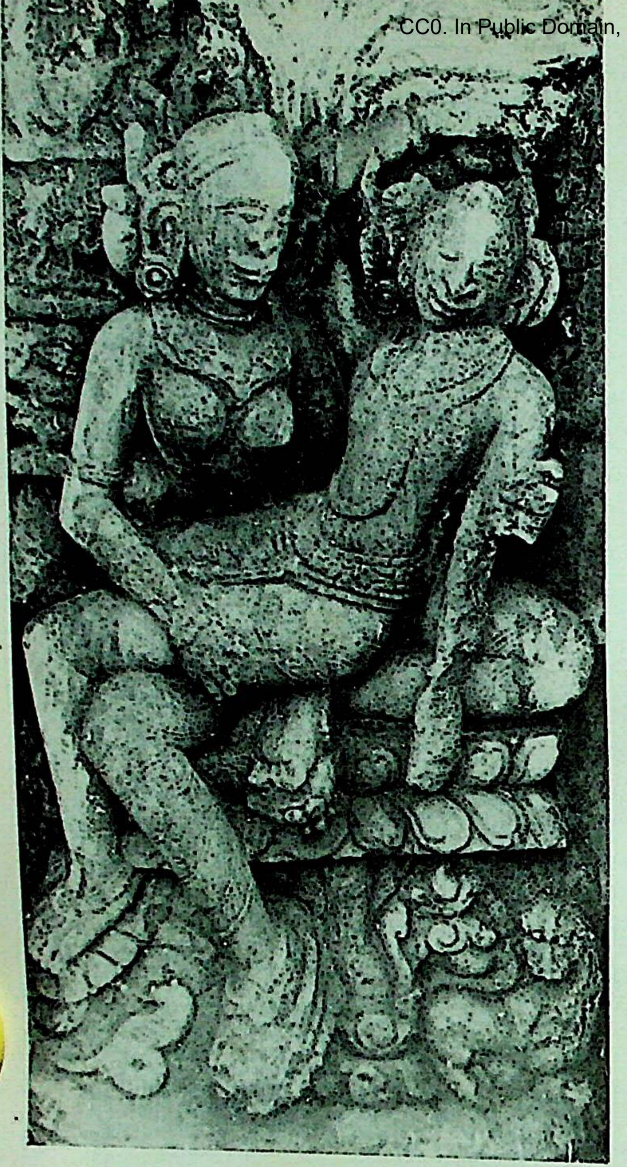
16. Orissa State Museum; Manasā/Jaratkāru.



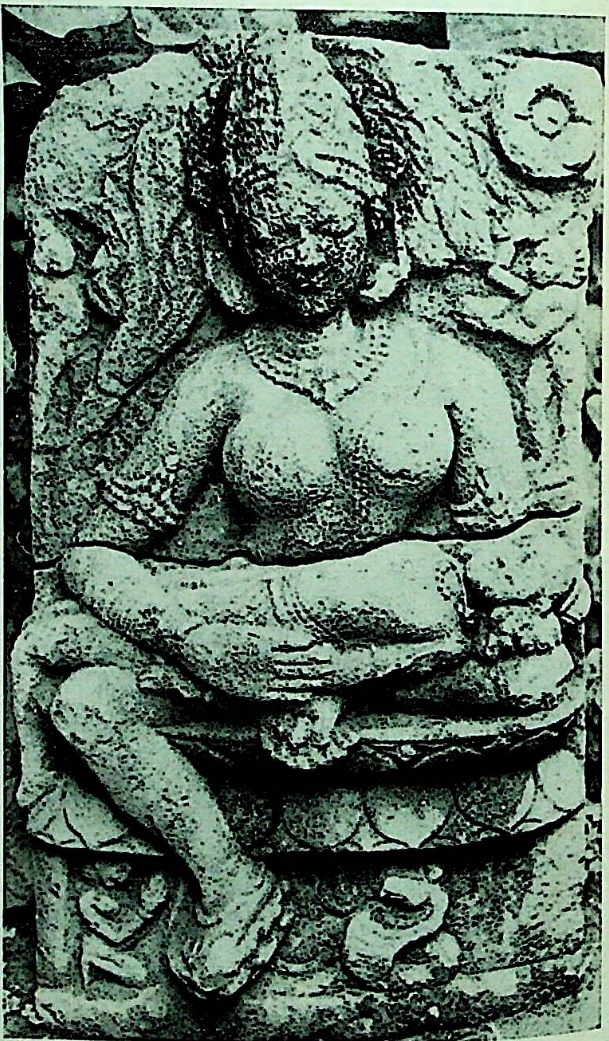
17. Khilor; Manasā/Jaratkāru.



18. Kenduli; Manasā/Jaratkāru.



19. Māntri : Kakharua Baidyanātha Compound; Manasā/Jaratkāru.



20. Pitapara: Aṅgeśvara Compound; Manasā/Jaratkāru.

THE 'ROYAL CENTRE' AND GREAT PLATFORM AT VIJAYANAGARA.

GEORGE MICHELL

Vijayanagara, the capital city which gave its name to the great south Indian Hindu empire dominated the political and cultural life of the peninsular from its foundation in 1336 until its violent destruction by the muslims in 1565. For more than two centuries the wealth of south India was concentrated at this imperial city where ambitious building projects were carried out in order to create a suitable setting for the royal rulers : even today, the monuments express the power and pretensions of the Vijayanagara kings. In fact, this unique architectural ensemble constitutes the most complete record of an ancient royal Hindu city to have been preserved in India and one of the greatest urban expressions of the relationship between kings and gods.

Covering a vast area of about twent-six square kilometres (today encompassing several modern villages), the ruins of Vijayanagara are still plainly visible. These consist of great temple complexes, fortification walls with gateways, administrative and residential structures, as well as a host of other buildings—palaces, stables, watch-towers, bridges, aqueducts, baths and wells. All these structures are significantly disposed in the dramatic and wildly beautiful landscape which dominates the city.

To the north-east are the bare rocky outcrops through which the Tungabhadra river flows. These barren and impassably craggy hills enclose narrow gorges but also open up to create a wide valley with water rushing over enormous boulders. The hills are of a granite weathered to every shade of grey, brown and pink, and are split into rocks of the most astonishing shapes. Piled high one upon the other, these boulders form gigantic hills with deep fissures : it is indeed a landscape of fantastic confusion. Here, most of the great temple complexes of the city are located—either beside the river on confined areas of flat land, or at the summits of various rocky outcrops that overlook the river. This is the 'sacred centre' of the city, corresponding with the wildest and rockiest part of the site : it is here that the gods are accessible to man. Further away from the river are several isolated hills with temples on their summits.

The association of temple architecture with mountains, rocks, caves and rivers is to be sought in the ancient mythological references to the site, such as those in the Ramayana (the village of Anegondi on the Tungabhadra is identified with Kishkindha; Sugriva and Hanuman took refuge on Matanga hill; Rama waited for

Hanuman on Malyavanta hill) and also the Purāṇas in which the meeting of Shiva and Pampa (Hampi) at the riverside is described, as well as the subsequent betrothal and marriage. (The latter events are still commemorated today in two festivals which attract huge crowds to the Virupaksha temple.) In addition, there is also a more general identification of sacred architecture with nature. At Vijayanagara simple shrines are often formed out of caverns, fissures and overhanging rocks, or perched precariously, even dramatically, on curved boulders. Some temples even enclose rocks or grottoes within their finely constructed exteriors. The temples blend into the landscape, as though to dissolve the distinction between natural and manmade forms.

As the landscape spreads southwards and westwards away from the 'sacred centre', it also broadens out to create larger expanses of flat ground, partly surrounded by rocky outcrops. The builders of Vijayanagara chose these protected flat areas as the location for their administrative and residential 'royal centre' (sometimes referred to as 'palace zone' or 'citadel'). Here are found the ruins of platforms, audience halls, palaces, watch-towers, temples, tanks, aqueducts, stables and bath-houses, all tightly contained in a complex irregular system of enclosure walls. Whereas the great temple complexes of the 'sacred centre' are well planned spacious structures opening out into the landscape, the administrative and residential buildings of the 'royal centre' appear to be haphazardly grouped together, crowding one upon the other, with little evidence of consistent planning. These buildings are enclosed by a series of concentrically arranged fortifications. It is clear that this part of the city was its very real 'centre'—politically, economically, administratively, and even ritually—and was thus at greatest risk during times of siege. The elaborate fortifications, continuing up and over the rocky hills, suggest something of these times of stress.

Further south and west, even as far as modern Hospet, the landscape becomes increasingly flat and open. According to the descriptions of visitors to the city, as well as various inscriptions, it was here that the great residential suburbs were laid out. As most of the housing must have been in wood and mud (as can be seen in present-day villages in the areas such as Anegondi), little remains today to suggest the homes of the numerous inhabitants of the city. A few isolated temples, once the 'sacred centres' of each of these suburbs, still survive but the streets and houses have vanished forever.

Vijayanagara's site, therefore, is essentially a transition from flat plains to rocky hills and river valley. This transition corresponds to the progression from residential suburbs to the 'royal centre', the focus of power, and then further on to the 'sacred centre' near the river—a movement away from the residences of common men to that of kings and, ultimately, to the realm of the gods. Beyond the river there is little urban development; here man is totally excluded.

Expressed graphically, Vijayanagara's town plan may be reduced to three zones arranged along a north-eastern axis. Clearly, the key zone is the 'royal centre', the meeting of the world of men (suburbs) and the world of the gods ('sacred centre'). Not only is the 'royal centre' the actual site from which the kings ruled the city, as well as the whole empire, it was also the ideological 'centre' from which their power radiated outwards in all directions. Thus the plan of the city, incorporating the transitions imposed by the landscape, may indeed have had a profound symbolic significance, calculated to reinforce the rule of the kings by providing them with a sacred 'dimension'. Through their rituals the Vijayanagara kings enacted their divine legitimacy, thus continuously reinforcing their sacred right to rule.

What then was the architectural setting for these royal rituals ? Today, the 'royal centre' of Vijayanagara is a complex of ruined administrative and residential structures contained within a number of walled enclosures. These buildings have never been adequately studied nor even definitely defined (the names by which many of them are now known do not necessarily indicate their original function) : the problem is further intensified by the confused plan, evidently the result of many phases of building and re-building.

Perhaps the most fascinating structures within the 'royal centre' are the so-called platforms, actually stone bases of buildings that have lost their brick or timber superstructures. One such platform (known as the 'audience hall') has the remains of one hundred stone column bases, though the columned halls that once soared upwards have now vanished. But the most conspicuous of these platforms, also the highest and most elaborately decorated, is the platform sometimes referred to as 'house of victory,' 'dasara dibba' or 'mahanavami dibba'. An analysis of this monument suggests that it owes its present form to at least three phases of construction, and that the first phase (corresponding to the lowest two levels, one stepped back over the other) may be contemporary with the early history of the city. The 'primitive' and vivid style of the carvings on thet apering sides of the granite bases (with massive stones and irregular joints) and on the balustrade flanking the staircase to the south, also the courtly nature of the scenes depicted (dancing girls, maidens and musicians; hunting and wrestling), are unique in the art of Vijayanagara. The stepped form of the building, too, is without parallel, suggesting that it had a unique function, strongly associated with some particular ritual.

The lively chronicles of the Portuguese visitors to the city in the 16th century sometimes mention platforms. Dominingo Paes and Fernao Nuniz both describe the great nine-day 'dasara' festival and according to Paes it was from the top of a platform that Krishnadeva Raya witnessed the elaborate ceremonies. One such platform, called 'house of victory' by Paes, was a onestoreyed structure standing on carved pillars; another building had 'two platforms one above the other, beautifully sculptured, with the sides well made and worked.' Certainly the description of the latter building is easily applied to the platform considered here (the 'house of victory' must have been some other structure, perhaps the 'audience hall').

More revealing, though, is the curious legend about the foundation of the city, imbued as it is with the spirit of invention An unusual hunting incident leads the two princely brothers, Hakka and Bukka, in consultation with their spiritual mentor, Vidyaranya, to 'discover' a suitable site for the city, the capital of their new kingdom. There is no attempt to build upon an empire of the past (Hakka and Bukka had few royal pretensions); on the contrary, a Hindu dynasty is 'invented' and a new city 'created'. (Nearby Hampi had already been adorned with many stone temples, mostly on Hemakuta hill, but it had never been the home of royal rulers.)

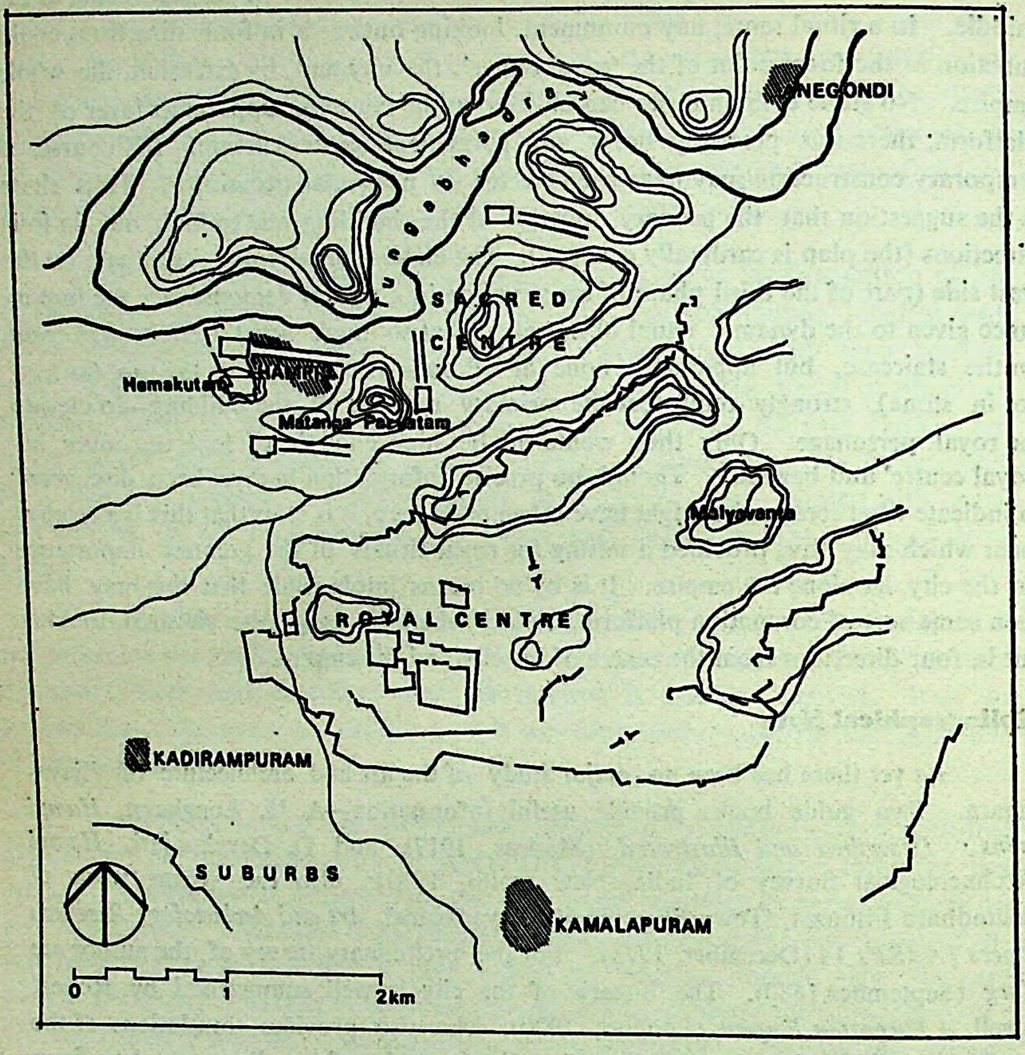
Though the early history of the city is still obscure, no doubt a royal administrative centre was rapidly planned and as wealth began to accumulate due to imperial expansion, there must also have been an increase in building activity. It is not unlikely that a distinctive architectural style was developed to express the ambitions of the new rulers.

Both the sculptural and architectural features of the platform considered here are unique : no other platform at Vijayanagara (or anywhere else in India for that matter) is constructed or decorated in quite the same manner : its early features are also remarkable. Thus there is the suggestion that this monument was 'invented' for a particular purpose and that it may indeed be closely connected with the early history of the city. In fact, at no other site can a legend about the foundation of a city be associated with such an exceptional stone monument. Perhaps the princely brothers, transforming themselves into the rulers Harihara and Bukka Raya I, may have felt the need to provide themselves with a unique architectural setting : indeed, the legend itself concentrates on this theme of 'transformation'. What more obvious for these early rulers than to literally 'elevate' themselves on a high platform decorated with courtly scenes. Opening outwards on four sides, the platform dominates the 'royal centre'; it is clearly a royal monument and a place of public display. According to the Portuguese visitors this may have been one of the structures used at festival times. (The third phase of the building probably belongs to the period coinciding with the Portuguese visitors; that is, to the reigns of Krishnadeva Raya and Achyutadeva Raya.)

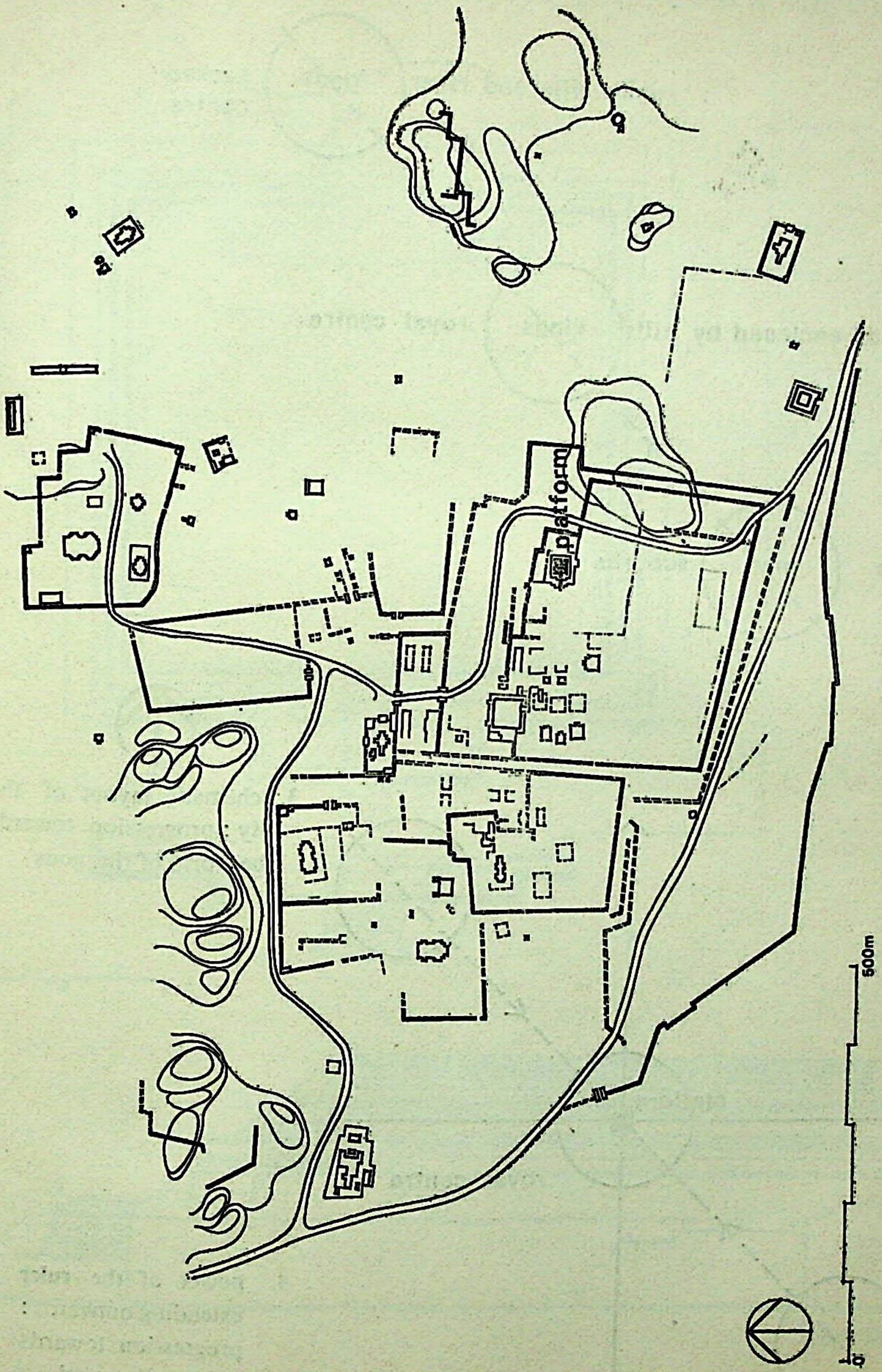
In the conceptual layout of the city the 'royal centre' is crucial, being at the middle. In a ritual sense, any monument looking outwards in four directions could function as the focal point of the 'royal centre', the city and, by extension, the whole empire. No stone column bases can be seen in the concrete uppermost layer of the platform; there was probably never any permanent superstructure. (Of course, a temporary construction may have been erected on particular occasions.) Thus there is the suggestion that the primary function of the building was to look out in four directions (the plan is cardinally oriented). The elaborately decorated staircase on the west side (part of the third phase of construction in chlorite) demonstrates the importance given to the dynamic ritual of ascent. That so much artistic effort was spent on the staircase, but apparently none at all on any chamber at the top (at least not in stone), strongly reinforces the primary purpose of the building—to elevate the royal personage. Only then would he be high enough to look out over his 'royal centre' and beyond. Though no precise information had yet been discovered to indicate what ceremonies might have taken place here, it is clear that this is a momument which may have provided a setting for royal rituals of the greatest importance for the city, let alone the empire. It is by no means implausible that this may have been some sort of coronation platform, a place where the king was elevated, looking out in four directions from the centre of his city and his empire.

Bibliographical Note

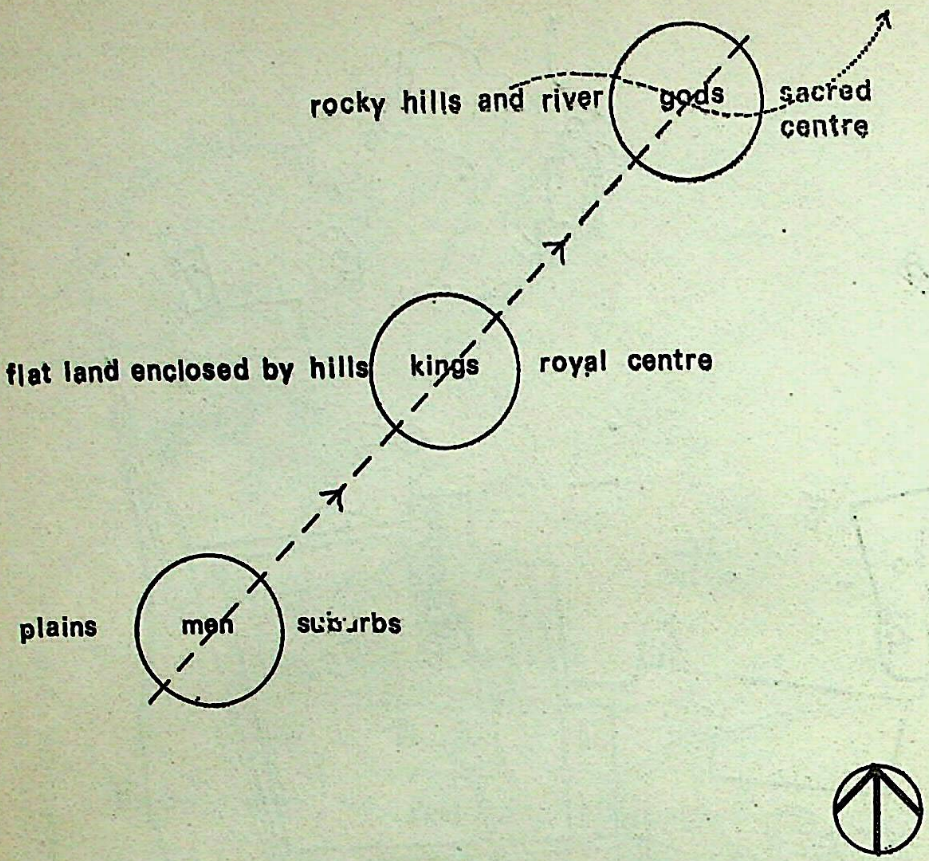
As yet there has been no major study of the art and architecture of Vijayanagara. Two guide books provide useful information—A. H. Longhurst, *Hampi Ruins : Described and Illustrated* (Madras, 1917) and D. Devakunjari, *Hampi* (Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, 1970); also the recent work of Vasundhara Filliozat, 'Town Planning at Vijayanagara', *Art and Archaeology Research Papers (AARP)* 14 (December, 1978). For the preliminary survey of the author see *Marg* (September 1680). The history of the city is well summarised by Robert Sewell, *A Forgotten Empire* (London, 1920), who also provides translations of the descriptions of the Portuguese visitors. (The quotation from Paes is taken from Sewell, p. 264). The most up to date historical survey is by M. A. Rama Sharma, *The History of the Vijayanagara Empire : Beginnings and Expansion* (Bombay, 1978).


ANEGONDI
Tungabhadra
SACRED CENTRE
HAMPI
Hemakutam
Matanga Parvatam
Malyavanta
ROYAL CENTRE
KADIRAMPURAM
SUBURBS
KAMALAPURAM
0
1
2km

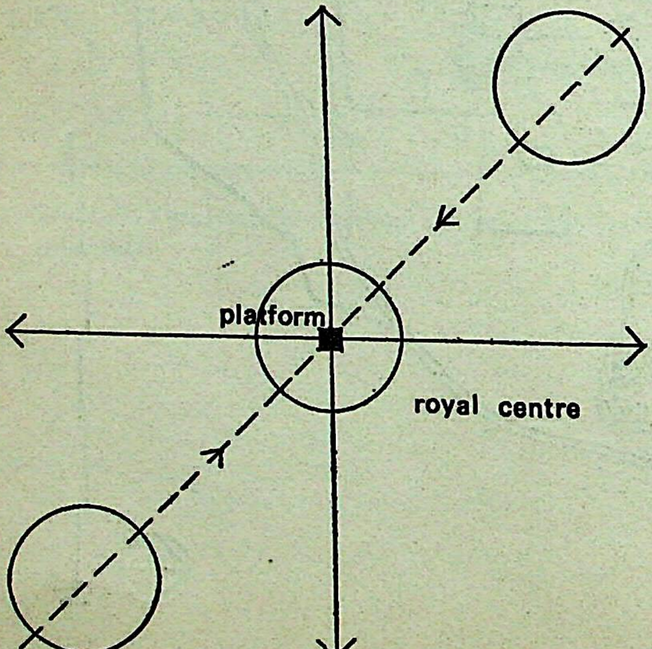
1. plan of Vijayanagara showing the principal fortification walls and temple complexes


platform
500m
0

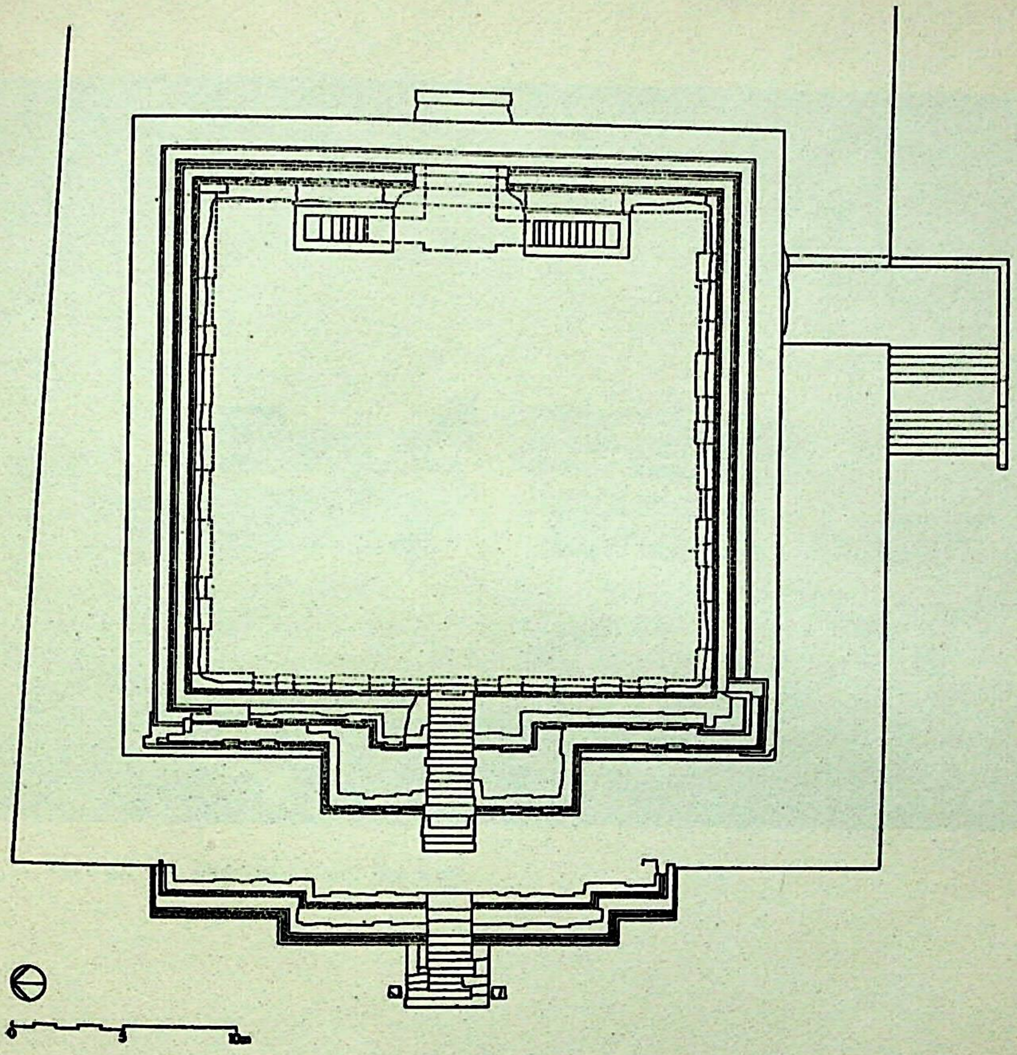
2. 'royal centre' of the city


rocky hills and river
gods
sacred centre
flat land enclosed by hills
kings
royal centre
plains
men
suburbs

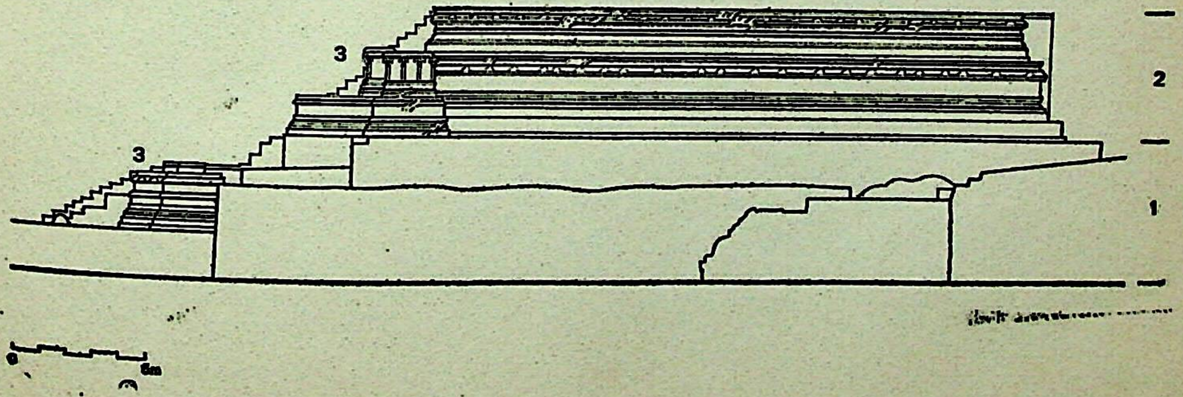
3. schematic layout of the city : progression towards the world of the gods


platform
royal centre

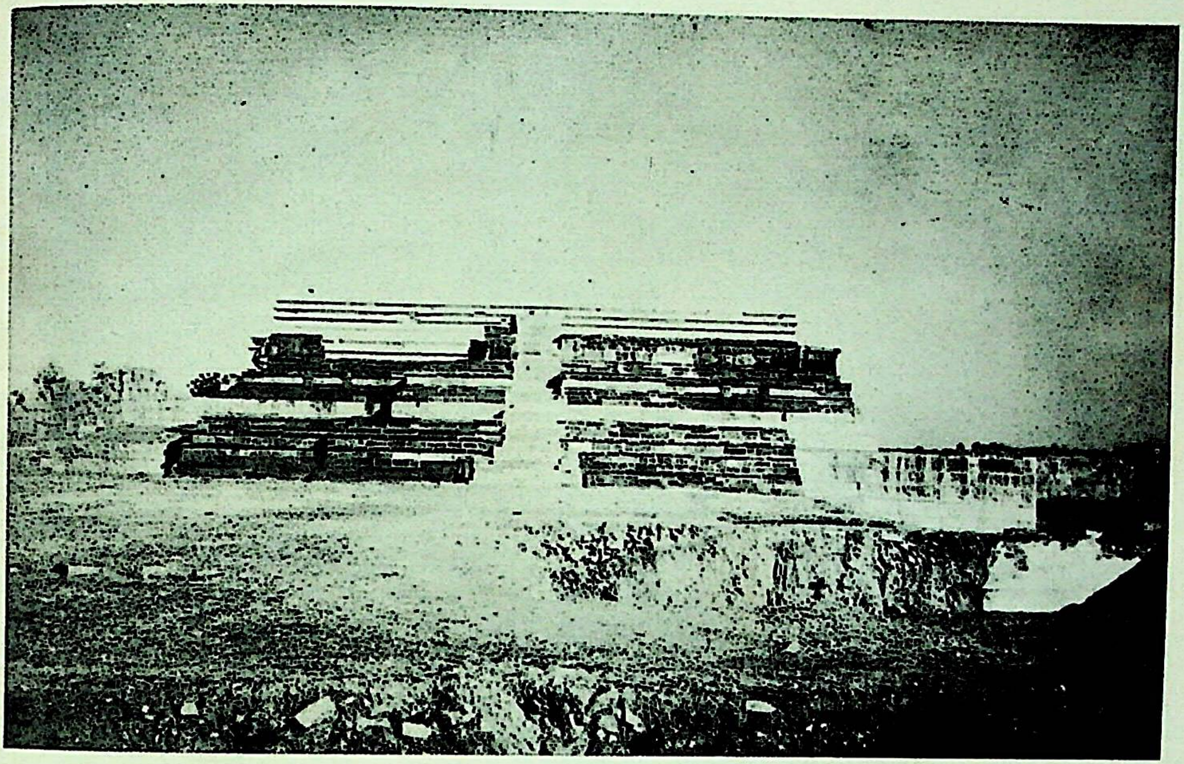
4. power of the ruler extending outwards : progression towards the 'royal centre'



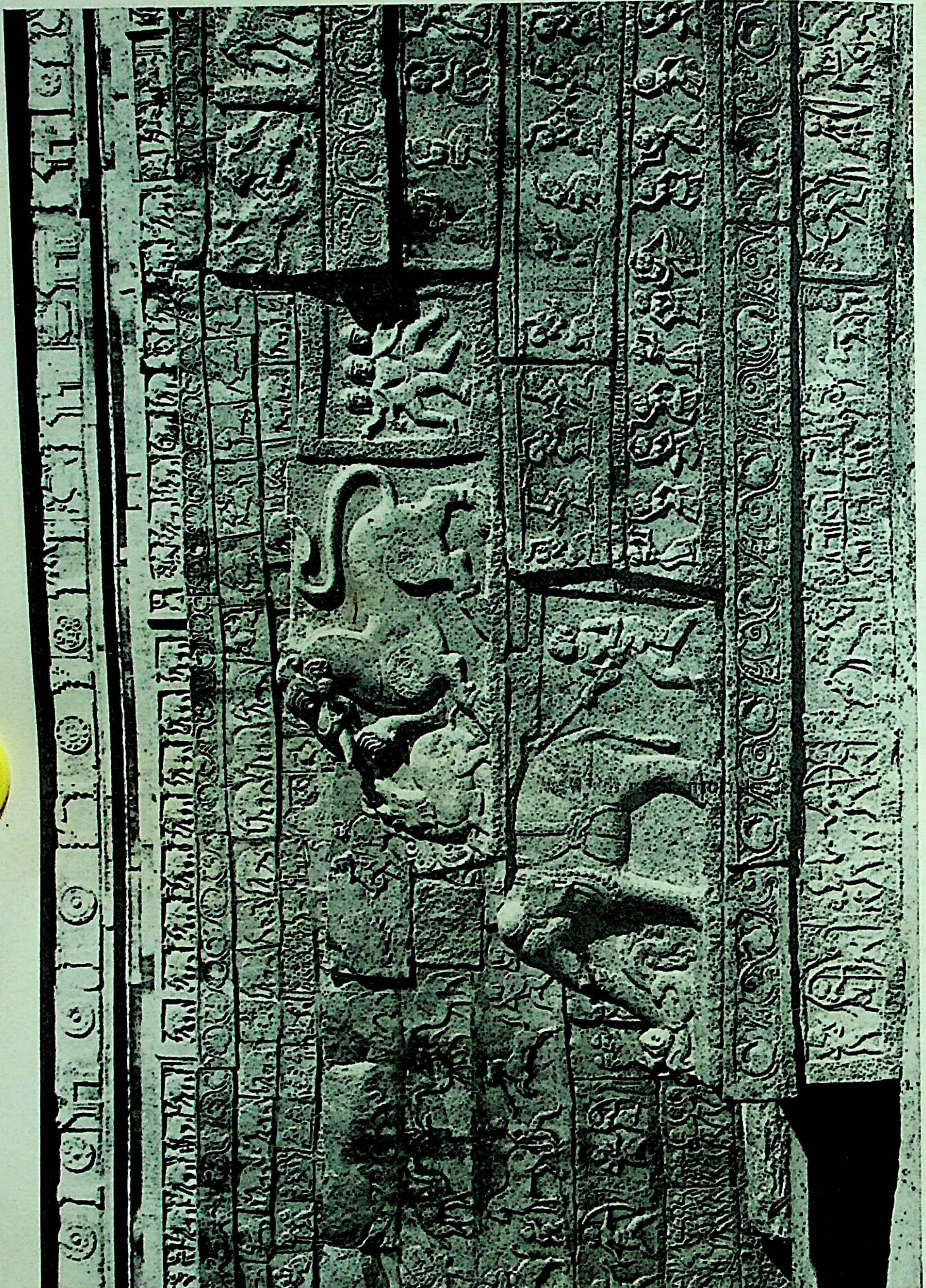
6. plan of the platform



7. south elevation showing the three phases of construction



5. View of the platform from the west.



8. Detail of sculptures (first phase) on south side.

THE "PRAṆĀLA" IN INDIAN, SOUTH-ASIAN AND SOUTH-EAST ASIAN SACRED ARCHITECTURE

M. A. DHAKY

It was, and still is, customary in Indian temples to lustrate the cult image every morning. Possibly from the times when image worship acquired a significant place in ancient Indian religions, the lustral water of the deity began to be looked upon as sacred and hence taken on par (but not exactly identical) with the *tīrthodaka*, water of a holy river or *kuṇḍa* (step-well) at or beside a *tīrtha*, place of pilgrimage.[1] A special chute,—*praṇāla* or *praṇālī*[2], also termed *nāla* or *nālī* in the Southern tradition[3],—was inserted, customarily in a particular wall of the sanctum, for discharging the lustral water.[4]

The *praṇāla*, as a device and by logic of its function, had its origin clearly in secular architecture, attached as it was at appropriate points for draining out the rain water from house-tops, terraces and courtyards. Its use in the context of religious architecture, however, permitted greater scope to a sculptural treatment which

---

1. A spoonful of lustral water of Śiva-liṅga as also Viṣṇuite and Śakti images is reverentially put in the mouth and gulped (*ācamana*) by pilgrims and devotees. A bath with the lustral water of Jina Pārśvanātha of Stambhanaka (Thāmbhaṇā : Śvetāmbara sect) near Cambay in Middle Gujarāt and of Jina Candraprabha of Prabhāsa (Digambara sect) in Saurāṣṭra was believed among Jainas of the medieval period to cure leucoderma. (I omit references to original sources on this information, it being only a side issue in the present discussion.)
2. The term *praṇālī* also had meant "canal" in early historical (Mauryan) times; the medieval term for "canal" is either *nāla* or *sāraṇa*. (Again I leave out citations since not relevant to the central theme.)
3. The citations from the original texts will be given at relevant places in the discussion to follow.
4. The sanctuary wall's particular side at which the *praṇāla* was inserted depended on the orientation and the type of plan of the temple. Its situation in the elevation generally was related to the floor-level of the sanctuary, or, depending on the special circumstances, lower or higher than the latter. It was also fixed at a point in the upper reaches of the *jagatī*-platform when such one was present. The question of position will be clarified at a relevant place in the present essay. For draining off the waters from the upper floors of the *sāndhāra* (Karṇāṭaka) or *anarpita* (Dramila) Dravidian *vimānas*, the *nālas* were inserted all around (excepting where the *maṇḍapa* joined) inside the *hāra*-parapet.

eventually crystallised into well-marked formal conventions. In some cases, in certain architectural traditions,—particularly in some Southern ones,—the *praṇāla* later is also invested with its special iconography. And yet, even in its somewhat elaborate and ornamental forms, the *praṇāla* is not, nor was it ever, looked upon as an *objet sacré*. All its constituent elements are subservient to a single purpose, its only function, to conduct the water after ceremonical bathing of the image to its destiny,—mother earth,—or, as in some cases, to a specially built or hollowed out sink or receptacle.[5]

The function of *praṇāla*, be it in context secular or sacred, is universally the same and simple. It is the formal expressions which have a more immediate concern to the present discussion. The different regional and period schools of temple architecture in India, and by extension South Asia and South-East Asia, had in the past arrived at somewhat differing formal solutions of this device and in some cases varying aesthetic interpretations.

For *praṇāla*, some of the extant *vāstu*-manuals from North as well as South India, refer to the functional and also structural and positional particulars besides formal aspects, though they cast no clear light on its early history nor do they give any hint about its development. This is partly because the available written literature specifically represents the traditions current in medieval times in Northern and Southern India, and partly because the history of the development of *praṇāla*, or for that matter any architectural feature, motif, moulding or device was a subject with which they were not immediately concerned; nor do they seem to be worried about, even conscious of, such problems. On the other hand, the builders of, and likewise the writers of rules concerning, the earliest temple-buildings do not seem to be bothered about *praṇāla*, nor does there exist, excepting in some stray cases, material examples of this device. The lustral rite *(snāpana-vidhi)*, if it was in vogue, perhaps was not so elaborate in earlier times and the water in the sanctum was either collected directly from the floor in a metal vessel, preferably *tāmra-kuṇḍi*[6], or was drained out through a simple hole, terminating sometimes in a very plain and short or long drip. The evidence in any case is not abundant. The beginnings of a regular *praṇāla* of course seem to have been made, —the evidence is fairly clear in North India,—in the religious buildings of the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa period. There is also some evidence of the continued use of this member in the Gupta-Vākāṭaka and posterior periods, though the formal details by then were not quite the same. It is from the eighth century, however, that a few temples in the North show the existence of conspicuous, even attractive if not pretentious *praṇālas,* though some of those which today are found as stray sculptured pieces might originally have been associated with the *jagatī*-platform (when one was present) rather than the sanctuary proper, but the aim still was the same. In further South, though it apparently developed at a somewhat later period, the evidence being clear particularly from the later part of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century, there is also some indication that an elementary form of the conventional Southern type of *praṇāla* may have been in vogue a century earlier. The situation in South-East Asia, where *praṇāla* apparently was not as abundantly used as in India, is, with the exception perhaps of Jāvā, otherwise similar to what obtained in South India. But the lack of hoary antiquity, perhaps more apparent than real, for *praṇāla* in direct association with the deity's sanctuary, is more than compensated by its other interesting aspects : Its iconographic part and the merits of its formal art as represented by late medieval examples in South India and some specific pre-medieval and medieval instances from the North.

---

[5] In the Rāvaḷphaḷi Śivaite Cave-temple at Aihoḷe (Karṇāṭaka : Early Calukya : *c.* last quarter of the 6th cent. A. D.), the sanctuary floor is scooped out below the drip of the *pīṭhikā*, to form a sort of water-sink. In structural temples such an expedient would not have been practical. It is likely that either a metal vessel was placed below the drain-end, or else the water might have been allowed a free flow on the ground of *garbhagṛha* from the drip of the *pīṭhikā* (if such one existed) and next released from the drain-hole from the sanctuary wall. About the sink or tank, or cistern, the illustrations mostly are met with in Southern India. These are discussed in the last portion of this essay.

[6] Judging from the practice current in some modern temples, it is likely that such copper vessels possibly were placed below the drip of a *pīṭhikā* (pedestal) of a *liṅga* or image inside the cella. Where drips, and correspondingly the receptacles, were not provided, the water possibly was laboriously gathered from the pedestal-tops or floor of the sanctum.

The Dolphinoid praṇālas

The available technical references on *praṇālas* of the Northern traditions are rather few though sufficiently significant for knowing its principal aspects. The *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra,* (c. A. D. 1035-1055) for instance, refers to the formal features of *praṇālī,* though the context in which the allusion occurs pertains to domestic architecture. The text goes on to say : "Make *praṇālī*-drain all around with (its) wall-end jutting out (in shape of) *grāha* (sea-monster)" :

> *Praṇālayaḥ sarvataḥ kāryā mūla-grāhāgrā nirgamāḥ |*
>
> *Samarāṅgaṇasūtradhāra* 21.48'

The *grāha*-gargoyle, that is to say the *makara-praṇāla,* so ubiquitous in medieval North Indian temples, is thus clearly mentioned in, and its form confirmed by, the theoretical treatise of the highest acclaim in medieval Northern Indian architecture.

The next reference is encountered in the *Vāstuśāstra* of Viśvakarmā, a compendium of Maru-Gūrjara (Western Indian) architecture of about the later part of the eleventh century[7], and also in the *Aparājitapṛcchā* (*c.* late 12th or early 13th cent.)[8] of the same tradition, to the grotesque *makara*-gargoyle for clearing the water out of the temple's *jagatī*-platform :

---

[7] The work is still unpublished. The late Shri Prabhashankar Sompura and I were once working upon it.

16

> *jala-niṣkāsa makaraiḥ mukhaīśca vikṛtānanā* |
> *Vāstuśāstra*, "Jagatīlakṣaṇādhyāya", 13"

and

> *jala-niṣkāsa makara-mukhaiśca vikṛtānane* |
> *Aparājitapṛcchā*, "Jagatyāṅgasamudāya", 115.32'

A good example of *makara-praṇāla* in the context of *jagatī* in Maru-Gūrjara style is met with in the marble temple of Mahāvīra at Kumbhāriā (*c.* A. D. 1062). The snout (*śuṇḍa*) of the sea-beast once extending from and curling up above its upper jaw is mutilated (Plate 1); the monster's huge and obliquely placed eyes seem more a glassy appendage than an organic part of the body. A variant type, likewise in marble and in the same style and practically the same age, from Candrāvatī in the neighbourhood of Mt. Ābu (Plate 2), gives a fair idea of what the medieval *makara-praṇālas* in Western India looked like when complete. Both of these examples reveal the typical finesse of the material; that from Candrāvatī, though somewhat deficient in animation, possesses a somewhat more ample tail.

About a century after these examples, the great temple of Jina Ajitanātha at Tāraṅgā in North Gujarāt (V. S. 1221/A. D. 1165) carries this Maru-Gūrjara form of *makara-praṇāla* to a more ornate perfection.[9] Largely akin to this is the handsome *makara*-spout of the Goṇḍeśvara temple at Sinnar (Mahārāṣṭra : *c.* the early 13th century A. D.) in the Seüṇadeśa style (Plate 3), which perhaps was built by the valorous Seüṇa monarch Siṅghaṇa. The *makara* tail in this example is the most floriated of its kind in all contemporaneous North India.

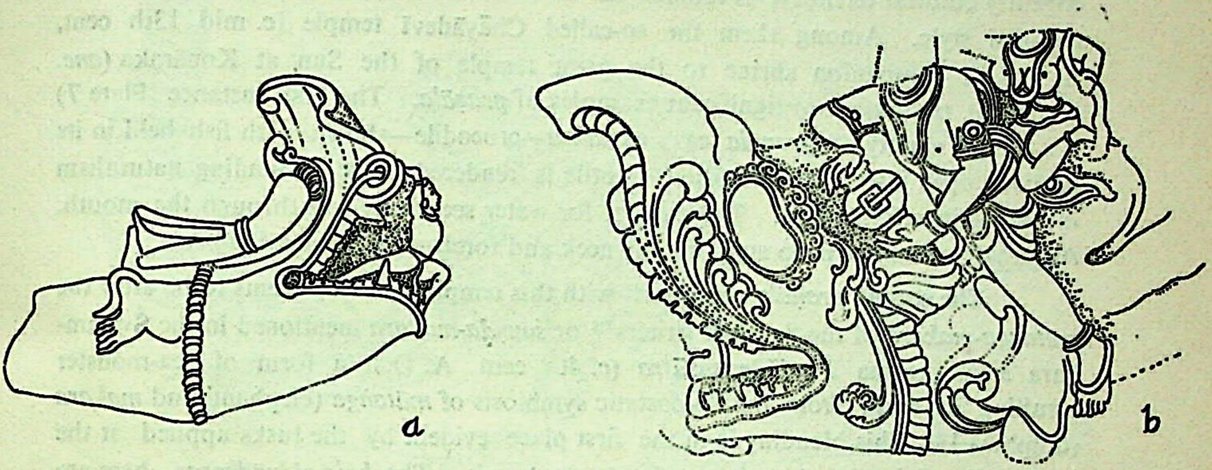
Of the Central Indian *makara-praṇāla* varieties, four representative examples may be profitably noticed. The Mālava types are exemplified by the *praṇāla* of the Śiva temple at Bhojpur and the one recently found as a loose piece near Bījāmaṇḍala Mosque in Vidiśā. The Bhojpur example is datable to *c.* the third quarter of the eleventh century (Plate 4). The wide gaping mouth with big bulging eyes, smallish hind part and still shorter tail of the *makara* in this instance are details that differ from those of the Maru-Gūrjara and Seüṇa parallels. A new feature is the presence here of a young but confident rider, *bālavidyādhara*, or angel-child, who is found in a somewhat similar association with *makaras* in the Dravidian tradition.[10] The second instance, from Vidiśā (Fig. 5 b), akin more to Khajurāho examples to be noticed soon, shows *udadhīkumāra* and consort, with the water-pot in hand, both riding the *makara*-back.

---

[8] Editor Popatbhai Ambhashankar Mankad, Gaekwad Oriental Series, No. CXV, Baroda 1950.

[9] Not illustrated. I base this statement on personal examination.

[10] The major Dravidian *vāstu* works, while describing the *makara* at the angles in the upper part of the *adhiṣṭhāna*-base, take cognizance of this detail.



5. (a) Boramdeo (Madhya Pradeśa). Śiva temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Ḍāhala-Āndhra style (Cedi-Kākatīya), *c.* 13th cent. A. D.
(b) Vidiśā (Madhya Pradeśa). Bijāmaṇḍala mosque (neighbourhood), *makara-praṇāla*. Mālava style (Paramāra), *c.* 11th cent. A. D.

The third instance (Plate 5) hails from Khajurāho, the major city of the Candella kings of Kālañjara in Jejākabhukti. The *makara* creature, despite decorative intentions inherent in its robust but taut body and further reflected in its neatly rendered ornaments, has a degree of realism which shakes our faith in regarding it a fabulous animal. Its size, somewhat larger than usually met with[11], is as impressive as its form, the form harking back to times geological. The beast's demeanour of a Jurassic reptile is heightened by its eyes, veritably of the foolish dinosaurs. The channel-block at the end of the *makara's* hind part bears on one of the lateral faces a figure of a seated deity with an adorer in attendance, the heads of both smashed off. One other example from Khajurāho (Plate 6), of the *praṇāla* of the Ādinātha temple (*c.* 3rd quarter of the 11th cent. A. D.), even though it is smaller and simpler, is in the same vein as the preceding example, abbreviated but more compact in form, tail-less but no less graceful.

---

[11] The size of the gargoyle generally depended on the dimensions of the temple-structure. The Khajurāho example under reference is currently at a place where no very large temple, excepting that of Jina Pārśvanātha, is to be seen in the vicinity. However, the Pārśvanātha temple possesses its own water chute, which, though ancient, is somewhat ordinary and hence merits no special allusion in the present discussion.

Eastern India, and Kaliṅgadeśa in that fairly extensive geographical and cogently cultural territory, is famous for its wealth of temples in a very distinctive regional style. Among them the so-called Chāyādevī temple (*c.* mid 13th cent, A. D.), a companion shrine to the great temple of the Sun at Konāraka (*anc.* Koṇārka), possesses two significant examples of *praṇāla*. The first instance (Plate 7) is a unique variety of *praṇāla* cast as *nakra*—crocodile—shown with fish held in its partially open jaws. The notorious reptile is rendered with astounding naturalism including its stealthy gait. The passage for water seemingly was through the mouth. An ornate columnar prop supports the neck and forelegs of the marine-beast.

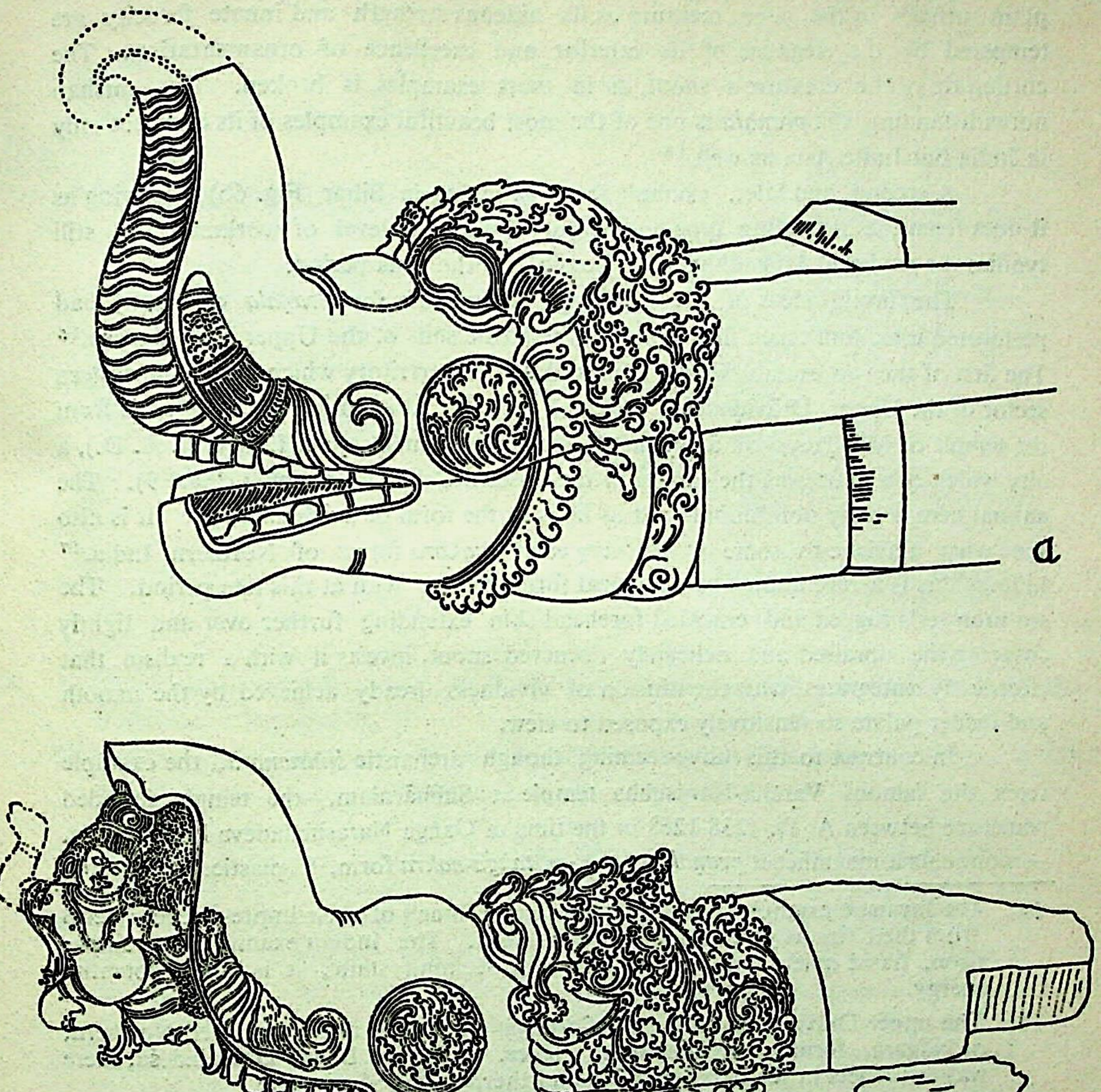
The second *praṇāla* connected with this temple (Plate 8) seems to be after the *mātaṅga-makara* of the Sanskrit writers[12] or *śauṇḍa-makara* mentioned in the Śvetāmbara Jaina āgama *Prajñāpanāsūtra* (*c.* 4th cent. A. D.), a form of sea-monster resulting in main from the hypostatic symbiosis of *mātaṅga* (elephant) and *makara* (dolphin).[13] This blending is in the first place evident by the tusks applied at the jaw-profile of the beast, and next by its proboscis. The *bāla-vidyādharas*—here are two—clasp and playfully hang at the end-loop of the proboscis, the latter being an organic extension of the creature's muzzle. This aquatic beast, obviously seeming mythical in contrast to the preceding example, still has been rendered with sensitivity that transforms it into a vivacious, though dangerous, denizen of the deep.

A third example of a stately *praṇāla* from Eastern India, this time from the Late Pāla period in medieval Magadha, is preserved and exhibited in a gallery of the Indian Museum, Calcutta (Fig. 6a). The *kari-makara*—elipho-dolphinoid—forepart of this water-chute is one of the most ornamental and highly finished examples of its class in all medieval India. The decorated tusks, the *darpaṇa*-medallions with delicate detailing in low relief on the profiles, the neck ornaments (*gala-valayas*) and the floriated scales of the head betray a finesse that is met with only in rare pieces of jewelry. The sea-beast's ornate areas are adequately relieved by the surrounding

---

[12] The *Amarakośa* (*c.* 6th cent. A. D.) refers to *mātaṅga-makara* in the chapter "*vārivarga*". Explained by the commentator merely as *jala-jantu-viśeṣa*, i. e. a kind of marine animal. Narahari in the *Rājanirghaṇṭa* (*c.* A. D. 1230-1250) simply glosses it as *mahā-matsya-bhedaḥ*, i. e. a species of great fish. The recent work *Śabdakalpadruma* explains it as *mātaṅgākāro-makaraḥ*, implying a *makara* having the shape of an elephant. The commentators' glosses are too general: that of the author of the *Śabdakalpadruma* is even literal.

[13] The *Prajñāpanā-sūtra* enlists five varieties of *grāha*, the names given are in Prakrit (as the whole text is). These are : *dilī, veḍhalā, muddhaiyā, pulagā* and *sīmāgārā* (*sūtra* 65).



6. (a) Unknown site (Bihār). *Makara-praṇāla*. Early Magadha style (Late Pāla), *c*. 10th-11th cent. A. D. (Indian Museum, Calcutta).

(b) Monghyr (Bihār). *Makara-praṇāla*. Late Magadha style (Sena), *c*. 11th-12th cent. A. D. (Patna Museum).

plain surfaces, in the same measure as its hideous strength and innate ferocity are tempered by the elegance of its exterior and excellence of ornamentation. The curling tip of the creature's snout, as in most examples, is broken. This mishap notwithstanding, the *praṇāla* is one of the most beautiful examples of its class not only in India but Indic Asia as well.[14]

A second, and later, example from Monghyr in Bihar (Fig. 6b), deriving as it does from the preceding type but plainly inferior in level of workmanship, still typifies the medieval Magadhan style, possibly of the Sena period.

The formal ideas of the Northern conventions for *praṇāla* eventually had permeated into, and taken firm roots in, the fertile soils of the Upper Drāviḍadeśa.[15] The first of the two examples from Āndhradeśa (the terrritory which forms the eastern sector of the Upper Drāviḍadeśa), selected here for illustrating the trends, is from the temple of Māṇḍavya-Nārāyaṇa at Bhīmavaram (Sāmalkoṭ : *c.* 12th cent. A. D.), a city which one time was the capital of the Eastern Calukyas of Veṅgī (Plate 9). The animal here is truly dolphinoid, cast as he is in the form of a *śiṁśumāra*.[16] It is also somewhat atavistic to some of the very early *makara* forms of Northern India.[17] Indeed, this is a rare and rather atypical form to meet with at this late period. The sea-monster's rugged and crackled forehead-skin extending further over and tightly covering the upraised and delicately decurved snout, invests it with a realism that effortlessly integrates with the illusion of vividness already achieved by the smooth and tender palate so sensitively exposed to view.

In contrast to this alive-seeming though archaistic *śiṁsumāra*, the example from the famous Varāha-Narasiṁha temple at Siṁhācalam,—the temple founded sometime between A. D. 1238-1268 in the time of Gaṅga Narasiṁhadeva I of Kaliṅga,—represents a magnificent *praṇāla* of the *mātaṅga-nakra* form,[18] plastically blending

---

[14] The Javanese examples are doubtless great; much of their impressiveness stems from their size as well as diabolic dynamism. The Indian example, in comparison, has a quiet dignity, and although seeming static, it is full of potential energy.

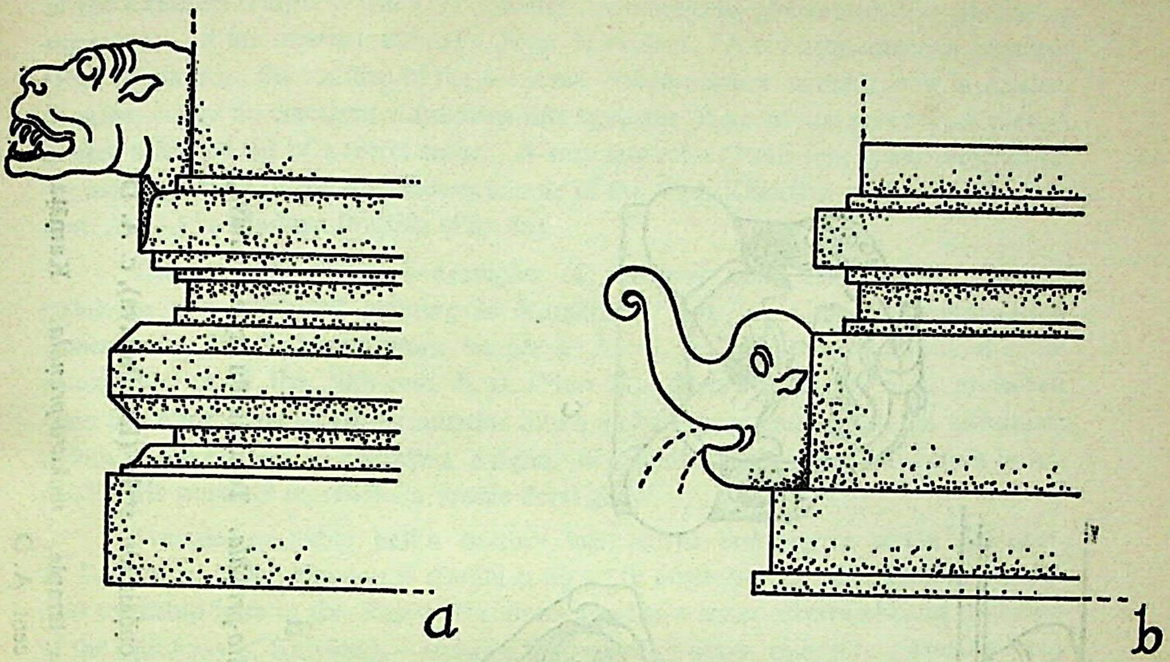
[15] The upper Drāviḍadeśa under the Calukyas of Vātāpi also patronised Northern, or Nāgara, forms of architecture. Hence, unlike the Lower Drāviḍadeśa, there was awareness in Karṇāṭadeśa of the northern forms of *praṇālas*.

[16] *Śiṁśumāra* is a form of dolphin, It is listed by the lexicographers alongwith other water animals. *(Cf. Bhāvaprakāśa* of Śāradātanaya, Vol. I, pt. 2, (*c.* 13th cent. A. D.) and the citation therefrom in the *Śabda-kalpadruma.)*

[17] *Cf.* Plate 9 and Fig. 1 b.

[18] The *mātaṅga-nakra* has been referred to by Kālidāsa (*c.* late 4th-early 5th cent. A. D.) :

Mātaṅga-nakraiḥ sahasotpatadbhirbhinnān-dvidhā paśya samudraphenān |
kapola-saṁsarpitayā ya eṣāṁ vrajanti karṇa-kṣaṇa-cāmaratvaṁ ||
Raghuvaṁśa 13. 11.



10. (a) Biccavolu (Āndha Pradeśa). Nakkala guḍi, *siṁha-praṇāla*. Āndhra style (Eastern Calukya), *c.* 9th cent. A. D.

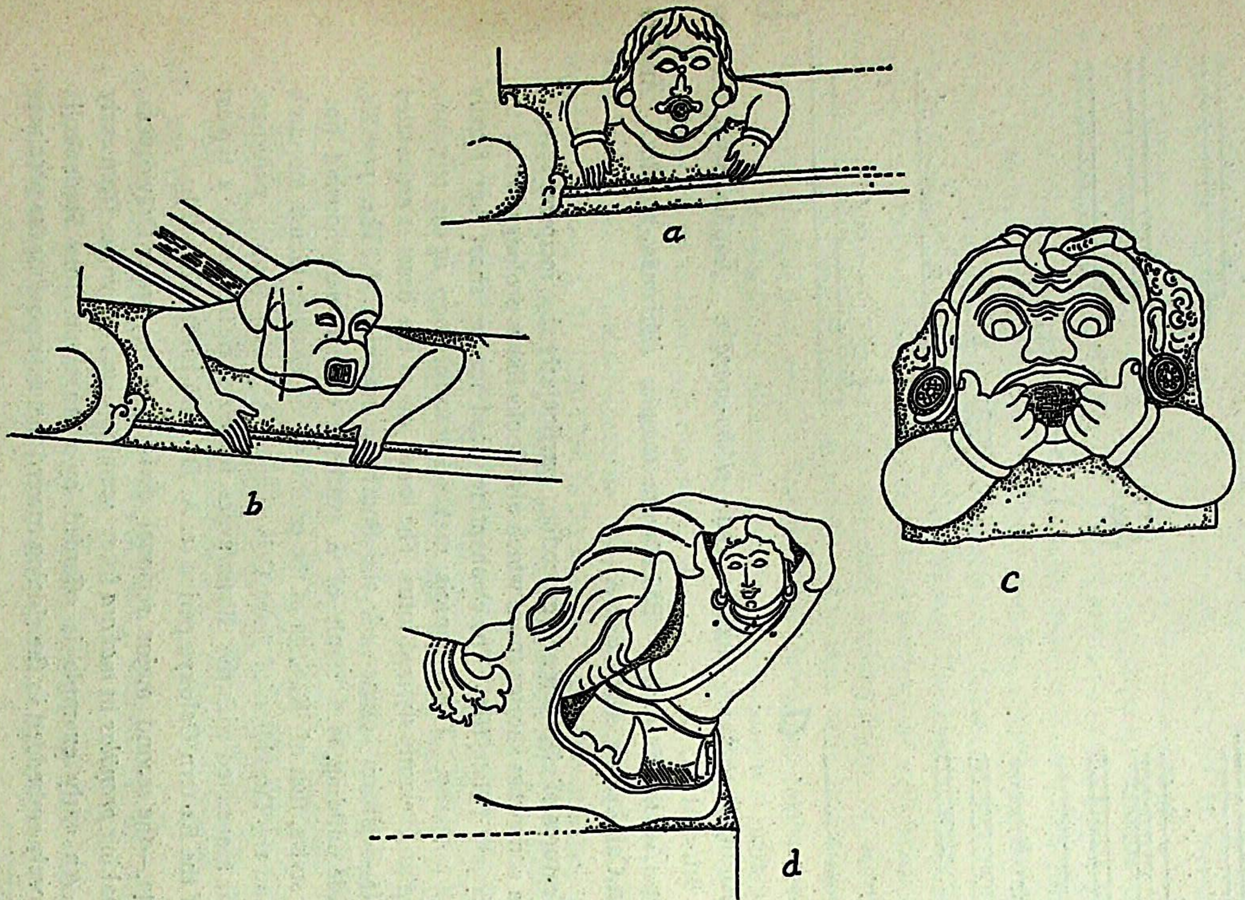
(b) Bhīmavaram (Āndhra Pradeśa). Bhīmēśvara temple, *śiṁśumāra-praṇāla*. Āndhra style (Eastern Calukya), *c.* 10th cent. A. D.

the diagonostic features of elephant and crocodile, particularly the incipient tusks of the latter, and a somewhat shorter snout which also looks like a prolongation of the dolphinoid upper jaw (Plate 10). The elephantine head has the short but fuzzily floriate scales of a porpoise. The proboscis makes a graceful loop at the terminal, the tip supporting an elegantly stylized lotus. The lower jaw of the beast is articulated to a *mṛṇāla-nālī*—lotiform chute—of the Southern tradition.[19] The *praṇāla*, as in fact the whole building, is a result of a synthesis of two neighbouring but widely divergent styles, that of Kaliṅga of the period of the Eastern Gaṅga monarch Narasiṁhadeva and the Dravidian of later Coḷa times. A much simpler paradigm of this *praṇāla* is associated with the Bhīmeśvara temple at Bhīmavaram, a typical Āndhra temple of the Eastern Calukya period (*c.* A. D. 1000-1075) (Fig. 10 b).

In Karṇāṭa,—the second major regional division of the upper Drāviḍadeśa, the tradition of making *praṇālas* in *makara* form seemingly was in vogue from early Calukyan times. An early example is afforded by a fragment from Siddankoḷḷa (*c.* A. D. 700), loosely embedded in the sloping toward the waterpool in the precincts

---

[19] This element will be later discussed in detail in the present essay.



8. (a) Mahābalipuram (Tamiḷnāḍu). Dharmarāja ratha, *bhūta-praṇāla*. Toṇḍaināḍu style (Pallava), *c.* mid 7th cent. A. D.
(b) Mahābalipuram. Dharmarāja ratha, *kapi-praṇāla*.
(c) Kāveripakkam (Tamilnāḍu). *Bhūta-praṇāla*. Late Toṇḍaināḍu style (late Pallava), *c.* A. D. 800. (Government Museum, Madrās).
(d) Kuḍaveli-Saṅgam (Āndhra Pradeśa). Saṅgameśvara temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Karṇāṭa-Nāgara : Āndhra school (Early Calukya), *c.* early 8th cent. A. D.

of the Lakulīśa temple (Plate 11). Though economically delineated, the menacing ruggedness of the marine animal's head is evident. A contemporaneous example (Fig. 8d) is from the rooftop of the Kuḍaveli Saṅgameśvara temple, now in Āndhra Pradeśa, where an emergent *vidyādhara* lifts open the jaws of the *makara* as though it were a hinged lid of a secret cellar. A very late echo of this type is encountered on the *maṇḍapa* roof of the Boramdeva temple of the Cedi-Kākatīya style (*c.* early 13th cent. A. D.) in Madhya Pradeśa (Fig. 5a).

Clear or well-preserved examples of *makara-praṇāla* immediately after the Calukyan are somewhat wanting in Karṇāṭa.[20] The next important illustration comes from the Lakṣmaṇeśvara temple at Āvani, a Noḷamba foundation of *c.* the second quarter of the 10th cent. A. D. (Plate 12). Here, from the wall, projects a plain drain for some length terminating into a *makara*-frontage. From the cavernous mouth of the *makara* is disgorged a figure of a godling bearing a lotus-stalk in left hand. He possibly represents a uranic demi-god.

Founded probably half a century later (*c.* the last quarter of the 10th cent. A. D.), the so-called Nandappā temple at Sirval in north-eastern Karṇāṭa,—a prosperous township later in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa times (and to a lesser degree also in the times of the Cālukyas of Kalyāṇa), —shows a fine piece of drain ending in a *makara* head (Plate 13). The rest of the animal's body is carved on either side of the trough in prominent relief. (Alternatively, one may describe the form as a water-course supported by, and cut longitudinally through, the back of the *makara*). The sea-monster's mouth has no brutal intentions about it. Its narrowed eyes and nice whale-like teeth revealed in its effortlessly opening mouth reflect the creature's gaiety and jolly mood; and an easy unmixed "laughter" seems to take shape on its face-profile, an illusion created by the cut out upper lip. Its torso has a soft rodent tameness, the tail being florid in a somewhat ordinary vein. The relationship of the *makara* with the drain proper is unusually happy. It seems as though the *makara* has been "harnessed" to the drain and it frankly enjoys drawing it to some northerly destination.

The Jaina temple founded by the pious Lady Atimabbe in Lakkuṇḍi (*anc.* Lokiguṇḍi : *c.* A. D. 1008) possesses a *makara-praṇāla* in the more conventional Karṇāṭa idiom of the Cālukya period (Plate 14). The elephantine hind quarters, the neck seeming a cross between a bull and a rat, the rather misfitting large forelegs (more leonine than reptilian) and tail-loops like puffs of smoke ejected up by an almost imperceptible but rhythmic motion are the distinguishing features of this *makara*-monster. The creature's huge ferocious mouth and its body crouching in concentrated tension reflects a moment of the beast in its first encounter with some formidable enemy, a stegosaurous suddenly face to face with the tyrannical tyaranosaurus ! A *vidyādhara* sitting over its neck, on the other hand, is unperturbed, indeed totally unconcerned, by the defensive stance of the beast. Like the Sirval instance, the drain portion is a dominant but not as ostensible or overbearing feature as the Āvani example.

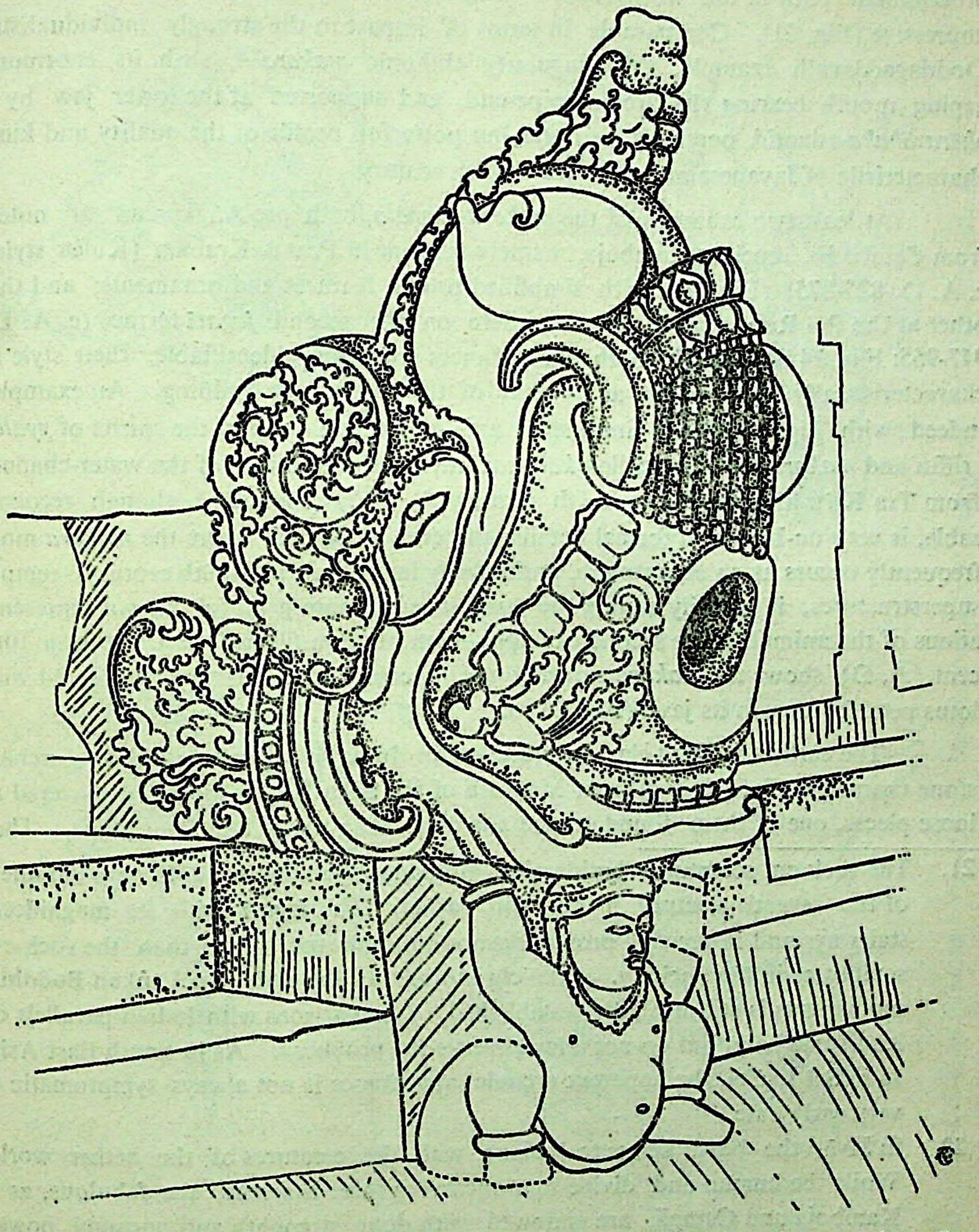
---

[20] Not many buildings of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa period survive. And the drains, wherever available, are in general plain.

The Hoysaḷa temples, even the grandest or the finest such as at Belūr, Haḷebiḍ and Nugihalli, often possess simple, rectangular, box-like, though neatly chiselled *praṇālas* with no figural or other sort of decorative spout. On the other hand, there also are instances of *makara-praṇālas* revealing Cālukya affiliation, of which the one at the Cannakeśava temple at Maraḷe (A. D. 1130) is the most representative (Plate 15). The *makara's* legs in this instance are somewhat taller, almost *vyāla*-like; the parts of the florid tail,—upraised,—hint at the slow but steady gait of the beast, the body ornamented by accoutrements and trappings that are proper for a royal elephant. Its open mouth sphews conventional lotus buds with stalks. A four-armed uranic deity is mounted over its back. The frontage of the *praṇāla* is sealed by a panel bearing a couple, now badly weathered.

Radically differing is the *makara-praṇāla* of the Hoysaḷa Lakṣmīdevī temple at Doddagaḍḍavalli (A. D. 1112). It represents a conception which is almost an antipode of Maraḷe. The drain-channel is completely hidden in the wall, and, as in most North Indian examples, only the frontal *makara* spout comes to view. In form and manner this *makara* is unlike anything comparably known anywhere in India. Whatever minimal (and schematic) decoration it possesses, seems to grow out of its hide and thus is an organic part of its being. It is overwhelming, not because of its dimensions (which estimably are larger for the size of the sanctum), but because of its very distinctive expressiveness, seeming as it does a veritable symbol, a concentrate of the total power of Varuṇa, Uranus, Poseidon, the marine god of the ancient Aryan speaking people. Waters of all the oceans seem here to coalesce in a single titanic breaker, in its full upsurgence and all-engulfing march that took over the primeval earth after the first interminable rains. It is almost inconceivable that the Hoysaḷa school which revels in extreme ornateness ever could contemplate such a simple but extremely powerful, inornate but highly effective creation.

The *makara-praṇāla* was also used in ancient Śrī Laṅkā. An example from Anurādhāpura (now in the Museum, Plate 17) illustrates a hollowed rectangular conduit shot through the body of the *makara*, reëmerging as it does from the monster's gaping mouth to proceed for a small length further and turn downwards with a shapely bend. Indeed this mode reflects an archaic manner of manipulating the *makara-praṇāla*. The piece may date not later than the eighth century; perhaps it is still earlier. One more example from Anurādhāpura, *in situ*, is from the upper *jagatī*-platform of the Isurumuṇi vihāra (Plate 18). Like the other associated sculptures at this site, the *makara* has the summarised features done in the technique of the "schematic emphasis" of South India of the early Pallava-Pāṇḍya times, and the



21. Barabudur (Jāvā : Indonesia). Upper open *pradakṣiṇa, grāha-praṇāla.* C. A. D. 800. (After A. J. Bernet-Kempers).

praṇāla may have been fashioned in the eighth century A. D.[21]

Jāvā, too, possessed a few outstanding examples; those in the upper open processional path of the world-famous Stūpa at Barabudur are doubtless the most impressive (Fig. 21). Comparable in terms of impact to the strongly individualistic Doddagaḍḍavalli example, this singularly chthonic *makara*[22], with its enormous gaping mouth bearing the circular pipe-end, and supported at the lower jaw by a *bhāravāhaka*-atlantid, possesses the florid but powerful profile of the quality and kind characteristic of Javanese art of the late eighth century.

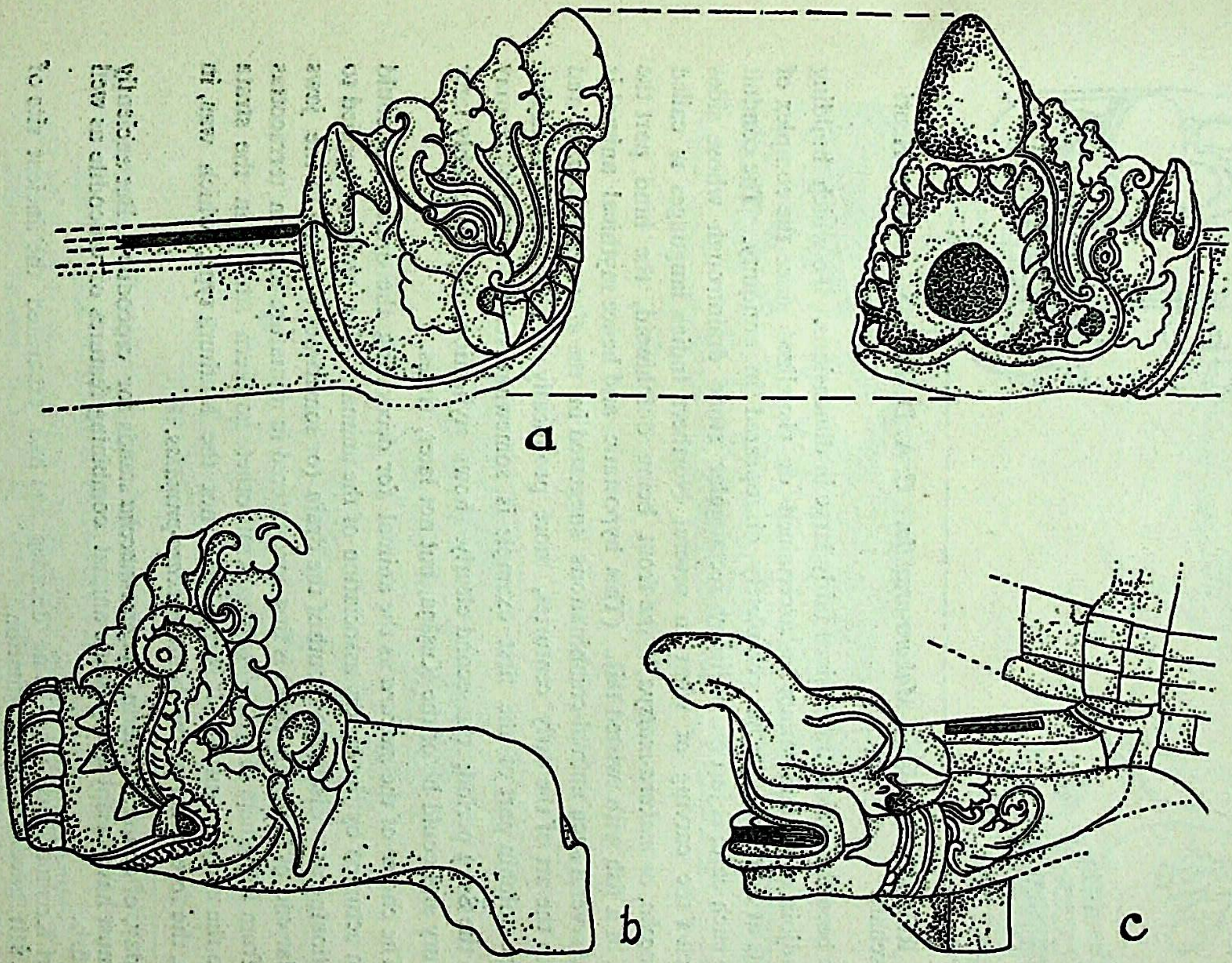
At least two examples of the *makara-praṇāla*, both pre-Aṅgkorean, are noted from Cambodia, ancient Kamboja, namely the one at Prasat Kraham (Kulên style, c. A. D. 825-875) (Fig. 23c) with simplified profile features and ornaments; and the other at the Prė Rup temple, applied there on the second *jagatī*-terrace (*c.* A. D. 947-965; Fig. 24 b). While both the instances are clearly identifiable, their style is characteristically Cambodian as is that of the rest of the building. An example, indeed with highly stylised lineaments and combining in part the spirits of *vyāla*-griffin and *makara*-monster (called *kālamakara*) at the terminal of the water-channel from Tra Kiêu in Campā (*c.* mid-7th century A. D. ?) (Fig. 23 a), though recognizable, is very un-Indian in formal details; and even in Campā, where the *makara* most frequently occurs as an accentpiece, particularly in the early (9th-10th century) temple superstructures, it is easily among the earliest and more graceful known representations of the animal. The second example, from Mī s'on (Temple E 4, *c.* 9th or 10th cent. A. D). shows the *makara* carrying the circular drain-pipe end, bordered with lotus petal border, in its jaws (Fig. 23 b).

The earliest *makara* class of *praṇālas* in India is represented by two archaic stone examples (Fig. 1 b & c) from Mathurā of the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa times, discovered as loose pieces, one of them found at the site of Kaṅkāli ṭilā of the Jaina stūpa. They

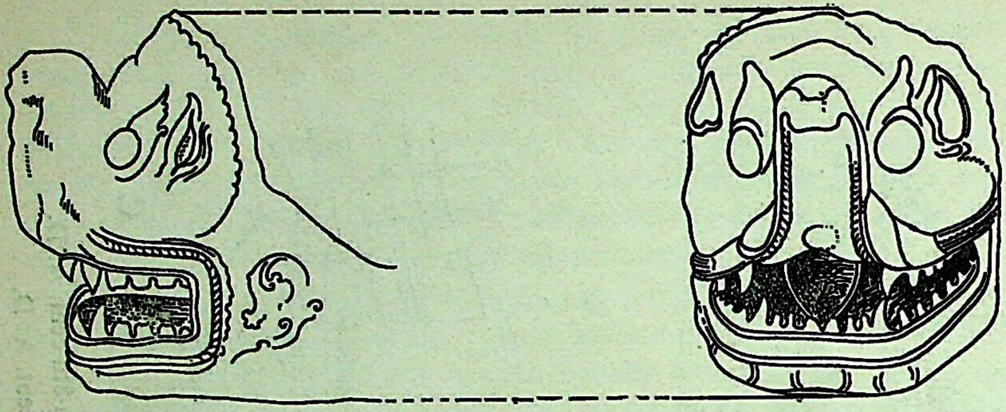
---

21. The rock-cut sculptures beside this monument, judging by style, are definitely of the seventh century if not still earlier. The *jagatī* with its magnificent stairways and interesting profile decoration, however, is later than the rock-cut sculptures in the vicinity. (The chronology of the early Śri Laṅkan Buddhist monuments is still not fully established. Comparisons with Indian parallels do lend some help, but do not always settle the problems. As in South East Asia, so in Śrī Laṅkā, the apparent archaic appearance is not always symptomatic of very early date.)

22. In Jāvā, the beast seems to belong with the creatures of the nether world. While the human and divine figural carving there is serene, the fabulous, as in Kamboja and Campā, are endowed with dour strenghth and uncanny power. The great *grāsa*-heads of Jāvā (and later of Campā also) carry weird and fiendish look about them.



23. (a) Trà Kiêu (Campā : Vietnām). *Makara-praṇāla* (loose piece). *C.* 7th-8th cent. A. D.
(b) Mi so'n (Campā : Vietnām). Temple E 4, *makara-praṇāla*. *C.* 9th cent. A. D.
(c) Kraham (Kamboja). Prasat Kraham 1 (Kulên, *makara-praṇāla*. *C.* 9th cent. A. D.
(a-c, after J. Boisselier).



24. Pré Rup (Cambodia). *Makara-praṇāla*. *C*. A. D. 947-965. (After Henri Marchal).

must have been the major drains since fairly large in dimensions. To which building did they adjoin or pertain cannot be ascertained or visualized since the complex of monuments at that Jaina site has completely disappeared in antiquity. The conduit proper, in each case, is just an ordinary rectangular stone draintrough whose sides show in relief the carving of what in several Northern Indian languages is called *magara-maccha*, or *makara-matsya*,[23] the front being dolphinoid, the hind part the latter half of a fish with twisted tail. (This hypostatic and hence mythical animal is one of the several such animal-combinations suggested in the aforenoted *āgama* and met with in the art of the early centuries, more prolifically in the Gupta-Vākāṭaka age.) The dolphin part of the first example is somewhat realistic; the piece may belong to the Śaka period; the second clearly shows stylisation and is probably later by a century and could be of the Kuṣāṇa, but not later, times.

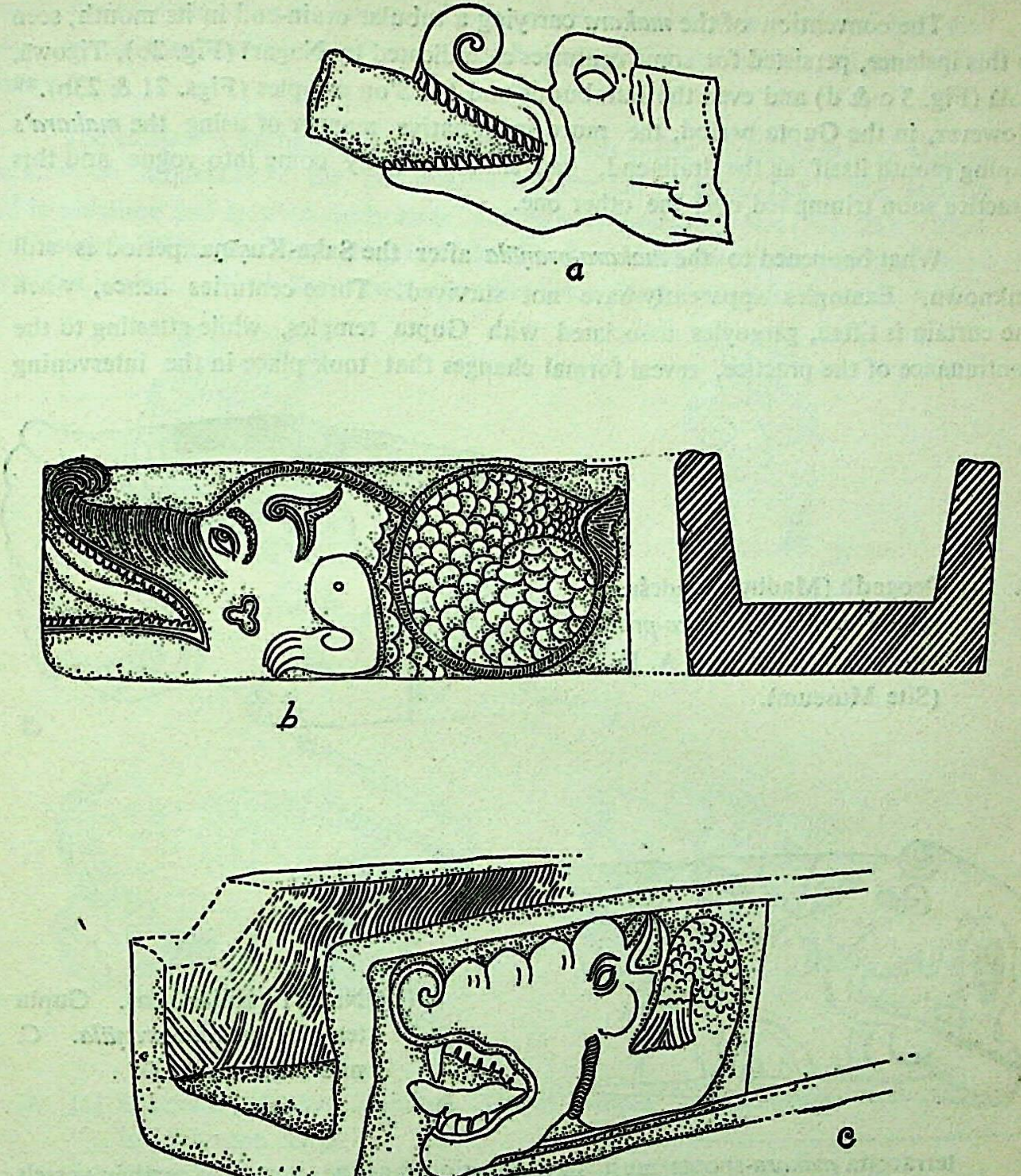
The choice of the *makara* as the animal for decorating the drain-front could have been actuated by the watery association of the animal. The *makara* applied to and functioning as a discharge-mouth of the drain (or sometimes carrying in the jaws the tubular end of the drain-pipe) is first encountered in miniature form in terracottas exumed from Rājaghāṭa (Fig. 1 a) and several other northern sites[24] in the strata related to the early centuries. It is this, and not the Mathurā type, which was, in the main, the forerunner of the future *makara-praṇālas*.[25]

---

[23] Today, of course, the term *magara-maccha* stands for crocodile. But anciently it must have meant a hypostatic animal combining features of crocodile as well as fish.

[24] Shri Krishna Deva, who some decades ago had excavated the ancient site of Vaiśālī, gave me this information.

[25] The Mathurā *praṇālas* are ordinary plain troughs. The *makaras* carved on their profile do not alter their form. The Rājaghāṭa and similar examples of



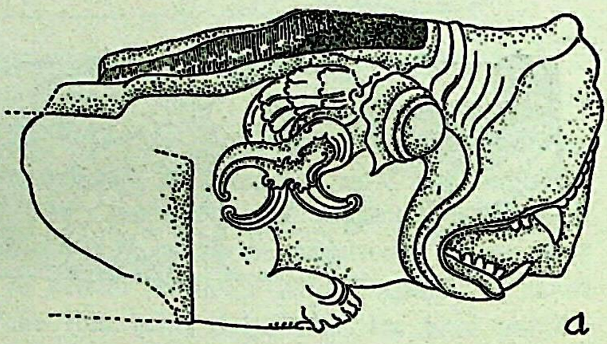
1. (a) **Vārāṇasī (Uttar Pradeśa). Rājaghāṭa (excavations), terracotta *makara-praṇālī*. Śaka-Kuṣāṇa or Tribal, *c*. 1st-2nd cent. A. D.**

   (b) **Mathurā (Uttar Pradeśa). Jaina stūpa, *makara-matsya praṇāla*. Probably Śaka, *c*. 1st cent. B. C.-A. D. (Government Museum, Mathurā).**

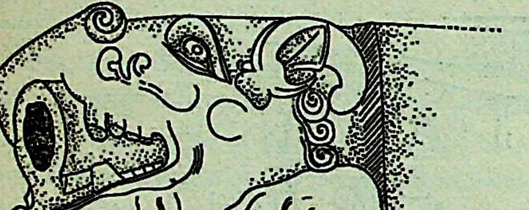
   (c) **Mathurā. *Makara-matsya-praṇāla*. Probably Kuṣāṇa, *c*. 1st-2nd cent. A. D, (Government Museum, Mathurā).**

The convention of the *makara* carrying a tubular drain-end in its mouth, seen in this instance, persisted for some centuries as indicated by Nagarī (Fig. 2b), Tigowā, Talā (Fig. 3 c & d) and even the Barabudur and Mī S'on exmples (Figs. 21 & 23b).[26] However, in the Gupta period, the more imaginative manner of using the *makara's* gaping mouth itself as the drain-end, had simultaneously come into vogue and this practice soon triumphed over the other one.

What happened to the *makara-praṇāla* after the Śaka-Kuṣāṇa period is still unknown. Examples apparently have not survived. Three centuries hence, when the curtain is lifted, gargoyles associated with Gupta temples, while attesting to the continuance of the practice, reveal formal changes that took place in the intervening



2. (a) Deogaḍh (Madhya Pradeśa). Gupta temple, *makara-praṇāla*. *C.* latc 5th cent. A. D. (Site Museum).



(b) Nagarī (Rājasthān). Gupta temple, *makara-praṇāla*. *C.* mid 5th cent. A. D.

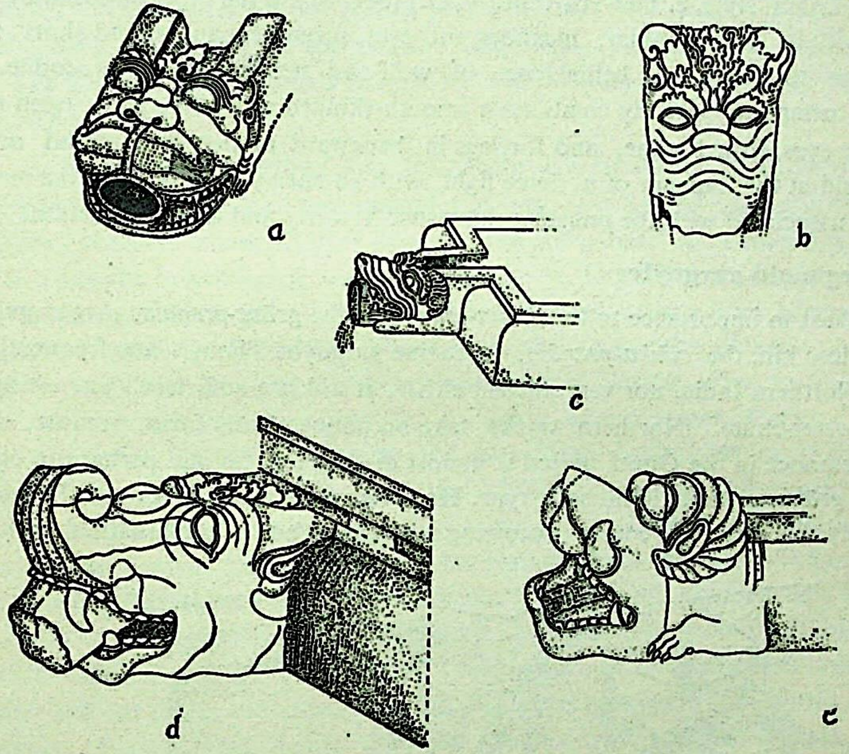
---

terracotta *makara*-spouts must have functioned as the nozzle of earthen vessels such as the *kuṇḍikās*. The function of the *makara praṇālas* in the brick and stone temples is almost identical with these latter examples. In the later stone instances, the trough proper, if provided, is generally hidden inside the well or completely disguised by the *makara*-head or its substitute at the front.

26. The drain-tube in the Rājaghāṭa example protrudes out. In the subsequent examples the tube-end is conterminous with the periphery of the opened mouth of the monster.

times in the *makara's* representation. The realism of the earlier instances has now given way to the fanciful, a tendency which gained further ground as times progressed.

The earliest is perhaps the one that once adorned the Gupta temple at Nagarī near Citor in Rājasthān (*c.* the 2nd quarter of the 5th cent. A. D.). The *makara* head is idealised and is given fairly large and powerful-seeming feet (Fig. 2b). That from Deogaḍh (Fig. 2a) is one other type that likewise demonstrates a free interpretation of the animal. But it is the two examples from Sārnāth (*c.* 5th-6th cent. A. D.)



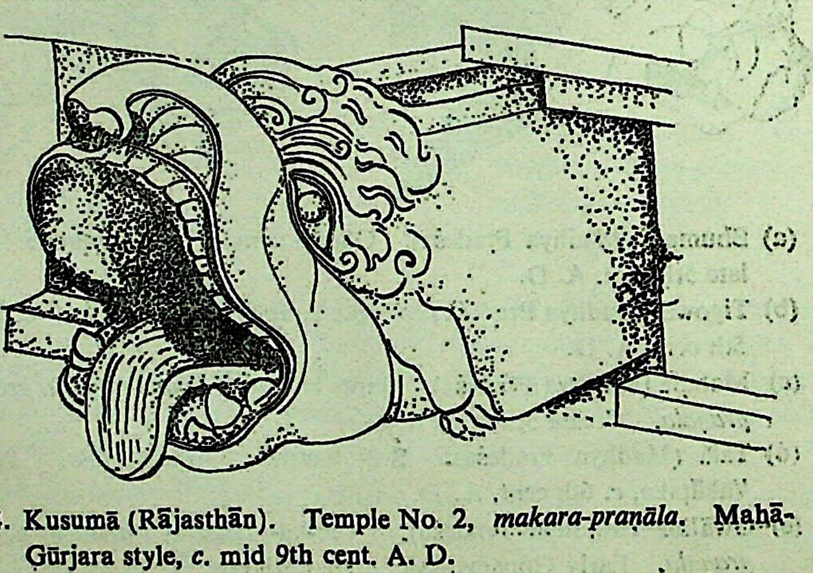
3. (a) Bhumarā (Madhya Pradeśa). Gupta temple, *grāsa-praṇāla*. *C.* late 5th cent. A. D.
   (b) Tigowā (Madhya Pradeśa) Gupta temple, *grāsa-praṇāla*. *C.* late 5th cent. A. D.
   (c) Mahḍiā (Madhya Pradeśa). Gupta temple, *Vāmana-piṭhikā*, *grāsa-praṇāla*. *C.* late 5th cent. A. D.
   (d) Talā (Madhya Pradeśa). Śiva temple. *grāsa-praṇāla*. Post-Vākāṭaka, *c.* 6th cent. A. D.
   (e) Gwālior (Madhya Pradeśa). Teli-kā-mandira, *mātaṅga-nakra praṇāla*. Early Gopādri style, *c.* mid 8th cent. A. D.

that for the first time show the development of the florid profile and hind portion (Plates 19-20). And the Talā *praṇāla*-monster for the first time betrays more prominent tusks, the snout elongated and curling like an elephant trunk (Fig. 3d). It is in fact the first available instance of the fabulous *mātaṅga-makara*.

Imaginative trends in *makara*-manipulation on *praṇālas* also continue in the post-Gupta and pre-medieval times, which ultimately led to medieval regional creations. Among them, the one at the so-called Teli-kā-mandir at Gwālior (*c.* mid 8th cent. A. D.) (Fig. 3e) and that at the ruined Viṣṇu temple at Kusumā in Rājasthān (Mahā-Gūrjara style, *c.* mid-9th cent. A. D.) (Fig. 4) are the most outstanding. The former with its semi-globular, incandescent eyes, prominent tusks, and short clawed feet seems to blend the belligerence of wolf and stealthiness of crocodile. The Kusumā instance apparently combines a smooth-skinned shark-like wide open mouth with wise eyes, frilled mane, and forelegs in backward motion that remind one of a giant squid at the moment of a fierce fight with an enemy. Rarely do the medieval *makaras* associated with the *praṇālas* show such vivacity and animated action.

The Gorgonoid gargoyles

Next in importance to the *grāha-praṇāla* is the *grāsa-praṇāla,* gorgon-gargoyle, and its close kin, the *siṁha-praṇāla*, or leonine gargoyle. Though not frequently met with in Northern India, nor very ancient either, it still is a sufficiently interesting form of the water-chute. Northern works take no notice of this form, because, after its first appearance in the Gupta period it almost disappears, failing perhaps to compete with the *grāha,* or aquatic monster type. However, the temples in Lower Drāviḍadeśa knew only this form, of course occurring not singly but in combination with other



4. Kusumā (Rājasthān). Temple No. 2, *makara-praṇāla*. Mahā-Gūrjara style, *c.* mid 9th cent. A. D.

adjuncts.[27] The exclusive preference for this form in the Lower South is fully endorsed by the reference to *siṁhāsya* or *siṁha-vaktra* (leonine head) or *kṛtrima-mukha* (gorgon-head) and *vyālānana* (griffinoid head) in Dravidian *vāstuśāstras*, which at the same time do not notice the *makara* with *nāla* or *praṇāla* associations.

Aesthetically not so moving or dynamic as the dolphinoid, the gorgonoid types occur first at the Gupta temples at Bhumarā (*c.* late 5th cent. A. D.), now a loose piece (Fig. 3a), Tigowā (*c.* mid-5th cent. A. D.) (Fig. 3b) and at Mahḍiā (*c.* late 5th cent. A. D.), in the last case applied to the image pedestal (Fig. 3c). In all these cases, the sculptors, for the forms, followed their own notions of *grāsa*, *siṁha* or *vyāla* head; hence they do not possess naturalism, the Bhumarā instance almost looks like a mask; they nonetheless throb with vividness, particularly the Mahḍiā instance (Fig. 3c).

In Karṇāṭaka, the *grāsa* form was known side by side with the *makara* in the early Calukya period; at least two examples of this early period (and still situated in the original context) attest to their vogue. The *grāha*-head with somewhat eroded features from the north-facing ruined temple (*c.* A. C. 700) (standing south of the *kuṇḍa*) in the Mahākūṭa group of temples, and the one, a little later perhaps, from the *jagatī*-terrace of the Latina-Sāndhāra temple of Galaganātha (Ālampur school) in Paṭṭadakal (Plate 21), are somewhat better preserved.[28] Several examples of this form are also available in association with the crowning *hāra*-parapets of other and more famous temples in Paṭṭadakal, namely the Dravidian Saṅgameśvara (Vijayeśvara, northern face : *c.* A. D. 725-733), and the Virūpākṣa temple (Lokeśvara, northern face : *c.* A. D. 740).[29] Rare instances also occur in the Late Rāṣṭrakūṭa times and the earliest years of the Later Cālukyas. An-example from the Akka-Taṅgai temple, Maṇṇe (Plate 22) datable to *c.* early tenth century A. D., and another one at Bāgli (Plate 23) of the date perhaps *c.* A. D. 975, are like three dimensional versions, rather provincial variations, of the *grāsa* forms that figure in medium relief inside the decorative belts or pillar ornamentations of Northern Indian early medieval temples. An instance of *siṁha-nāla* earlier than the Maṇṇe type is at the Nakkala guḍi in Biccavolu, Āndhra Pradeśa, and is more forceful in rendering (Fig. 10a).

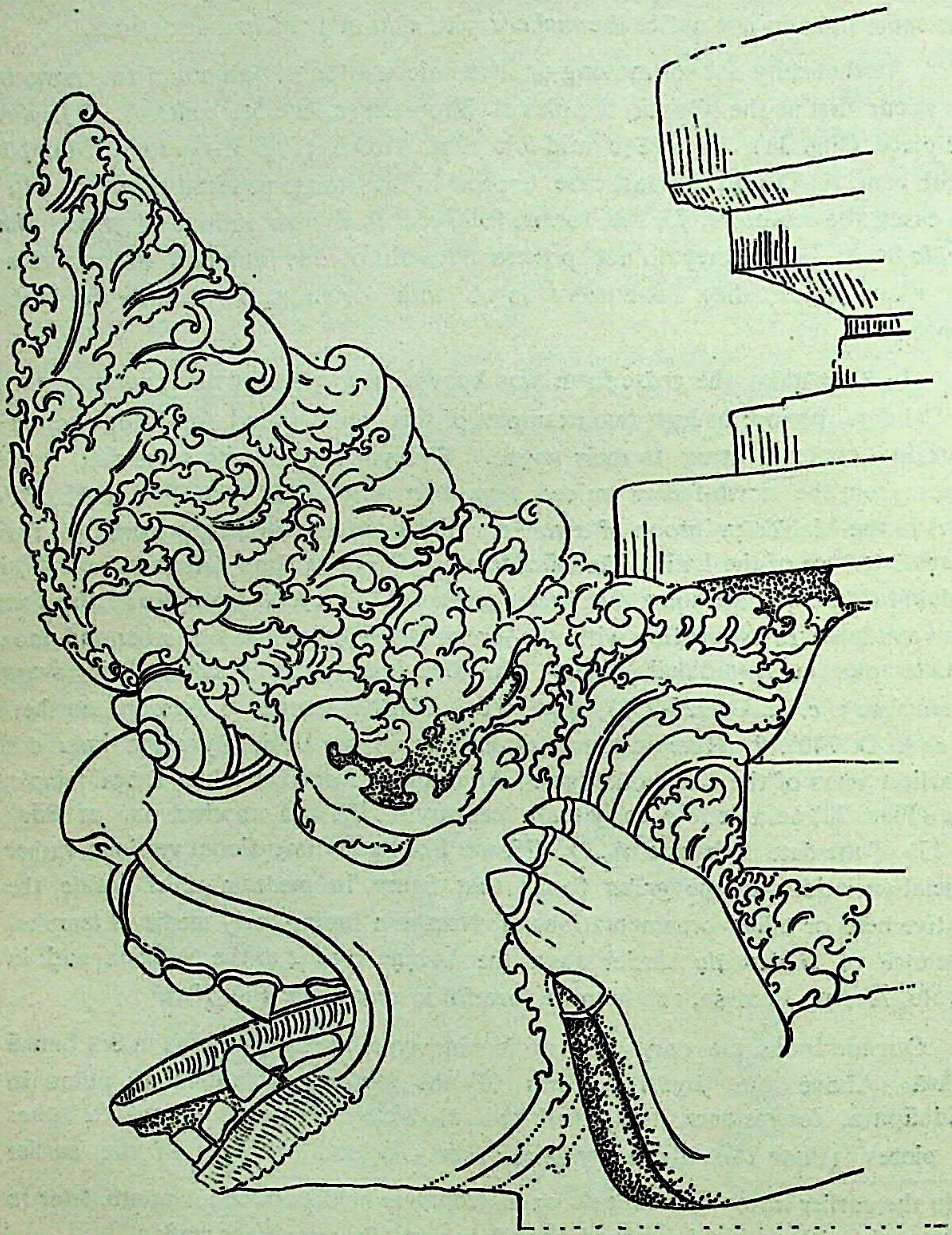
Outside India, the gorgonoid or leonine types are encountered in Śrī Laṅkā and Jāvā. Above the *jagatī*-platform of the celebrated Thupārāma Stūpa in Anurādhāpura, for instance, are staked two identical lion-spouts alongwith other loose pieces (Plate 24), which stylistically may belong to one of the earlier phases of the building activity at this ancient site, and may not perhaps be later than the second or third century A. D. The visage of the beast, in each case, is somewhat realistic, a point which would favour the early date here suggested for

---

[27] In the earlier instance, a shapely open trough is held in the lion mouth, later to be replaced by a highly stylised, closed or partially open lotus-stalk.

[28] These *grāha-praṇālas* seemingly were all around the *jagatī* platform.

[29] My friend Doris Chatham, as she was reading through this paper, drew my attention to these examples which I gratefully include.



22. Barabudur. Upper open *pradakṣiṇa, grasa-prṇṇāla.* *C.* A. D. 800. (After A. J. Bernet Kempers).

them. The Javanese instance from the Stūpa at Barabudur is highly distinguished, the *grāsa* with a terrifying gnomic face and a crown of flaming mane (Fig. 22) seems to integrate feral prowess with demoniac lust. Outside the Hellenic world, this is perhaps the most successful interpretation of the head of the gorgon-monster.

In point of fact, the gorgon-head met with in early Greek temples[30] is the formal basis of the Indian *grāsa*, the so-called *kīrttimukha*, which in turn went to South-East Asia and became an important, even dominant decorative motif, particularly in the temple art of Jāvā. The lion-head spouts, too, were universally used in classical Greek[31] and Hellenistic and Roman colonial temples[32], applied as they were at intervals on the sima-face to drain off the water collected in the side gutters of the tiled and pitched temple-roofs. Since several art-motifs had drifted from West Asia to India from the Maurya through Śuṅga, Sātavāhana to Śaka-Kuṣāṇa periods, it is not unlikely that at some stage in history the foreign formal ideas were adopted by Indian carvers and integrated in and interpreted according to their own traditions and cultural predispositions.

The Goblinoid gargoyles

In a few instances, the ubiquitous *makara* is replaced by a *jambhaka* or *bhūta* (goblin) figure. The medieval literary notices fail to record these types, probably since they are relatively early and rather rarely met with. The earliest *jambhaka-praṇāla* has been recently unearthed in association with a brick temple of the Vākāṭaka (main branch) period from Gondiyā (Mahārāṣṭra), assignable to the fifth century A. D.[33] The frontage of the rectangular drain carries the *jambhaka* figure; its round, open mouth was meant to throw the water out, and the legs of the creature clasp the lateral sides of the drain.[34] A second instance is from the famous Pallava monolith, the Dharmarāja ratha at Mahābalipuram

---

[30] The temple 'C' at Selinus (*c.* 6th cent. A. D.) shows terracotta gorgon head in the pediment, which perhaps is the earliest such example.

[31] *Cf.* A. W. Lawrence, Temples of Aphia (*c.* early 6th cent. A. D.) and Aegina (*c.* early 5th cent. A. D.) and Delphi (*c.* A. D. 525) (Figs. 21 a & b and 23). Also H. Berve and G. Gruben, different treasuries at the temple of Apollo at Delphi (Fig. 25), etc.

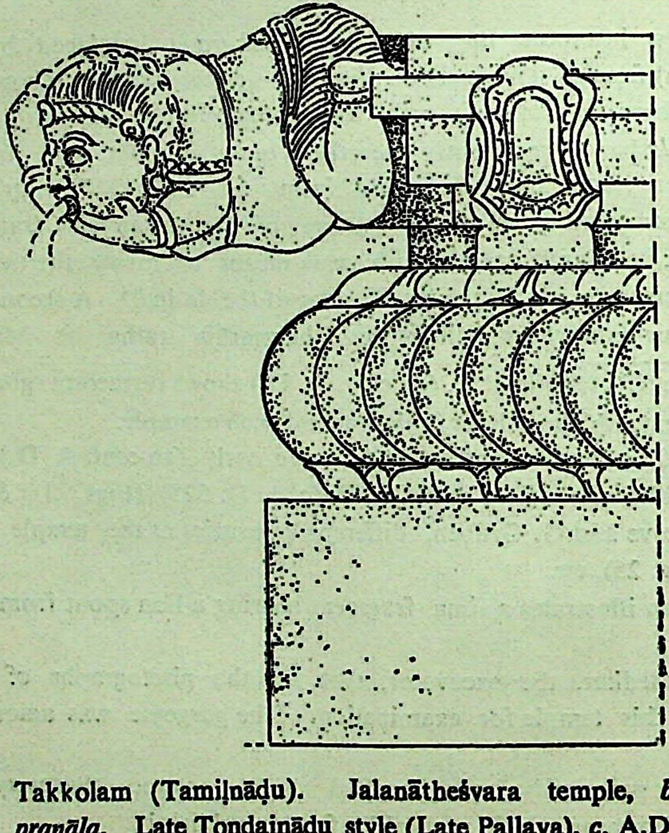
[32] Percy Brown illustrates a sima fragment bearing a lion spout from Balbek. (*Cf.* his fig. 2).

[33] A. P. Jamkhedkar, the excavator, sent me the photographs of the exumed remains of this temple for examination. The gargoyle was among the pieces excavated.

[34] Jamkhedkar generously had permitted me to reproduce that *praṇāla* for this paper. I, however, would prefer him first to publish it.

(*c.* A. D. 640) where at least two varieties of gargoyle, the *bhūta* (Fig. 8 a) and the *kapi* (monkey: Fig. 8 b) are applied on the *kapota* of the *prastara* (entablature) of the *āditala*, or first floor. One other Pallava instance of the *bhūta-praṇāla*, found among the fragments of a completely ruined but what must have been a magnificent foundation of the period of Dantivarmā in Kāveripakkam and datable to *c.* A. D. 800, possesses a high degree of finesse (Fig. 8 c) as all other beautifully carved fragments of this temple do. A third instance is connected with the *vimāna* of the Jalanātheśvara tample at Takkolam (Fig. 9), a foundation of the period of Pallava Aparājitavarmā (*c.* A. D. 875).

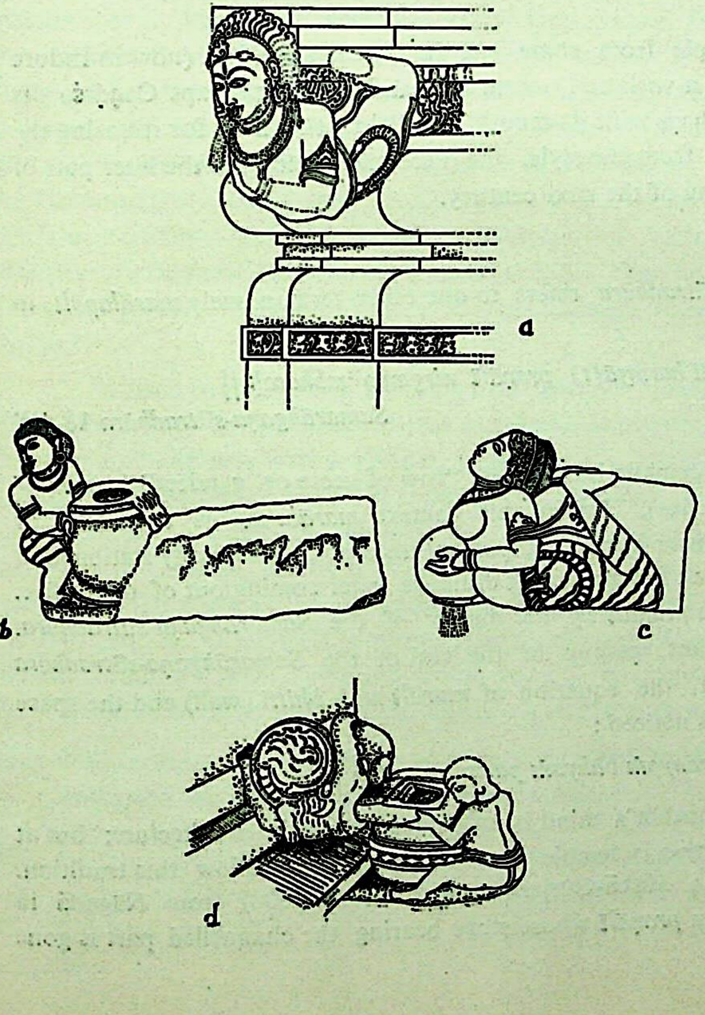
In medieval North, the famous Lakṣmaṇa temple at Khajurāho (A. D. 954), Jejākabhukti, possesses a *bhūta-praṇāla* attached to the *khura-kumbha* of the outer wall of its *sāndhāra* sanctuary, the ablution waters, as in the case of *makara-praṇāla*, are designed to be discharged through the mouth of the *bhūta* or *gaṇa* (Fig. 7 a). This perhaps is the only known instance of this variety from North India, and is indeed later than all the known examples from Tamilnāḍu.



9. Takkolam (Tamiḷnāḍu). Jalanātheśvara temple, *bhūta-praṇāla*. Late Toṇḍaināḍu style (Late Pallava), *c.* A.D. 870.

The Potoid praṇālas

Very rare, but indeed extremely imaginative, dignified and aesthetically arresting are the *ghaṭa-praṇālas*. Had *ghaṭas*, or globular pots, alone been used as glorified drips, they could hardly have been noticed excepting as a passing note. But the remarkable part is the evocative manner of employing the *ghaṭa* in association with figures, which lifts it from the commonplace to the higher level of symbology and art. The first instance is from Kaliṅga (politically now in Āndhra-Pradeśa), applied to the *jagatī*-platform of the Madhukeśvara temple at Mukhaliṅgam (Bhauma-Kara : *c.* late 8th cent. A. D.). A handsome figure of Nāgarāja (bust) here holds a finely formed and ribbed *ghaṭa* in his hands, from the lowered mouth of which the water passed out during and after the rains and daily or occasional ceremonial washings (Plate 25).



7. (a) Khajurāho. Lakṣmaṇa, temple, *vidyādhara-praṇāla*. Jejākabhukti style (Candella), A. D. 954.

(b) Nāgadā (Rājasthān). Caṇḍeśa with *pāli-praṇāla*. Mahā-Gūrjara style (Candella), A. D. 1000.

(c) Gurgī (Madhya Pradeśa). *Vidhyādharī-praṇāla*. Ḍāhala style (Cedi), *c.* 11th cent. A. D. (Municipal Museum, Allāhabād).

(d) Kevāṇ (North Gujarāt). Śiva temple *makara-praṇāla* with *pāli* and Caṇḍeśa. Māru-Gūrjara style (Calukya), *c.* early 11th cent. A. D.

The next example comes from the *jagatī* of the ruined, so-called Harṣat mātā temple at Ābhāneri in ancient Śākambhari in Rājasthān. What seem to be two *vidyādharīs*, female angels, lift the *ghaṭa* (Plate 26) with the verve of trained dancers and artfully turn it at a right angle to pour the water out. The symmetrical disposition of the female angels is almost like a monogram or coat of arms.

A third instance (Fig. 7 c) is a loose piece found at Gurgi, a Śivaite monastic and temple site of the 10th-11th century A. D. in Ḍāhala. Waters here debouched from the completely upturned *ghaṭa*-vessel held by a gliding *vidyādharī*.

A fourth example, of Mahā-Gūrjara style, hails from the Ambikā temple at Jagat in Rājasthān (*c*. A. D. 961). The evacuation canal protrudes out of the temple wall for some distance and the water is poured out through a *ghaṭa* held by a *vidyādhara*-angel inside a *snāpana-gṛha* templion specially built for receiving it (Plate 47 : *praṇāla* not visible).

Finally, a fine example from some site in Madhya Pradeśa (now in Indore Museum) (Plate 27), shows a variation where a *vidyādhara* or perhaps Caṇḍeśa sits on a cushion, holding the ghaṭa with its mouth parallel to the floor for releasing the ritualistic liquids. Judging from the style, the piece may belong to the later part of the eleventh, or the beginning of the next century.

The marāla-pālis

The *Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra* refers to one other term, namely *marālapālī*, in the context of water-chutes :

> *Marālapālī sā harmyā(t) praṇālī nirgamo 'mbhasaḥ* ||
> *Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra* 18.41"

Marālapālī would normally have meant "row of geese or ganders" (*marāla* = geese, and *pālī*=row, or series). But in this context *marāla* means the circuit or peripheral wall of a mansion or house, and *pālī* means a pot, presumably stationed at some point at the circuit wall for collecting drainage water coming out of the orifice. It is, therefore, equated with *praṇālī* by the author of the *Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra*. In point of fact, in a variant reading of the text of the *Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra* for the above-cited verse 41, the equation of *marālī* with *bhitti* (wall) and the space outside with *parisara* is thus noticed :

> *Marālayā bhitti sāmānyaṁ bāhyaṁ parisaro mataḥ* |

The context in the author's mind is of course domestic architecture; but at least two illustrations occurring in temple associations seem to follow this tradition. The one, a loose piece in Mahā-Gūrjara style (*c*. A. D. 1000) from Nāgadā in Rājasthān (Fig. 7b), shows a *praṇālī* whose stone bearing the channelled part is gone but the *pālī*-pot held by the figure (possibly Caṇḍeśa) survives. The other example is from the Old Temple at Kevāṇ in North Gujarāt, a Maru-Gūrjara example of the early eleventh century A. D.; it shows (Fig. 7d) a *makara* from whose mouth the water can discharge into an adjoining *snānadroṇī*-pot, while Caṇḍeśa (head gone) sits clasping the pot, possibly with the intention of drinking the sacred waters as hinted at in the Western Indian *vāstu*-texts.[35] In general, the sink or tank (noticeable at some temples in South India) for collecting the ceremonial washings from the sanctum is unknown in Northern India, and the *marālapālī* seems to have served the same purpose.

Snāpanagṛha or Caṇḍeśagṛha

A conception different from *marālapālī* from the iconographic point of view but serving an analogous purpose is that of a *snāpanagṛha* or a special shrine built for Caṇḍeśa, inside which the lustral water from the sanctum is received. Caṇḍeśa presiding over the lustral water is a convention known in the Dravidian tradition from at least the Coḷa period. At some stage, under the influence of the southern Pāśupata *Śaivāgamas*, the practice seemingly was also adopted in Northern India. References enjoining the construction of a Caṇḍeśa shrine to the North of the main (Śivaite) shrine are found in the *Vāstuśāstra* of Viśvakarmā (*c.* late 11th cent. A. D.), the *Vāstuvidyā* of Viśvakarmā (*c.* 12th cent. A. D.),—the two works of the Maru-Gūrjara tradition,—and the *Lakṣaṇa-samuccaya* of Vairocani, an Eastern Indian Pāśupata *Śaivāgama* (*c.* 11th-13th cent. A. D.). The former two works also lay down the general rules for the size of the Caṇḍeśa shrine in relation to the main shrine.[36]

At least two examples of such shrines survive, attesting to the practice during the tenth century in the Mahā-Gūrjara architectural tradition of Western India. The first one is the *snāpana*-shrine standing close to the north of the sanctum of Ambikā at Jagat in Rājasthān (*c.* A. D. 961) where the *praṇāla's* spout is shunted to the *snapana*-structure to empty the water inside. The *snapana*-shrine is open at the east, and the image of Caṇḍeśa, if any, is at present missing.[37] The second is a similar shrine standing to the north of the Trinetreśvara temple in Saurāṣṭra (*c.* the 2nd quarter of the 10th cent. A. D.), which is hermetically closed on all sides (Plate 46). Since the present shrine of Trinetreśvara is a rebuilt copy of the original, the *praṇāla* connecting the *snāpana*-shrine was removed during the reconstruction some seventy years ago.

---

[35] *ūrdhva-vaktraṁ su-tejāḍhyaṁ pivaṁtaṁ snapanaṁ sadā ||*
taṅkapāṇi Mahācaṇḍa praṇālādho vyavasthitam |
Vāstuvidyā 3. 54"-55'

[36] For the text, *see* my "Caṇḍeśa in North Indian Tradition", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta,* Vol. XII, No. 1-4, pp. 108-109.

[37] *Cf.* here plate 47.

The Southern Traditions

For *praṇālas*, the upper Drāviḍadeśa, comprising ancient Karṇāṭaka and Āndhradeśa, very largely followed the traditions of the North, of course with their individualistic formal interpretations as was noticed in the foregoing. It was the Lower Drāviḍadeśa, the land of the Tamiḷs, or Damiladeśa, and the adjacent country of the Ceras, or Keraḷa, which developed their formal conventions for *praṇāla* separate from the known Northern, though some small links with the more ancient Northern gorgonoid forms are possibly perceivable.

The *vāstu*-books of Damiladeśa as well as the Cēradeśa are in Sanskrit; they describe fuller formal details as well as expound a few more associative particulars than do northern texts, such as the position of *praṇāla*, the loci of their situation, *et cetera*, the aspects by which the northern works pass in silence. The first subject these Southern works talk about is the drain-hole itself and its position[38], the two vital points that go before the consideration of the spout proper.

The *Mayamata-vāstuśāstra*, the famous and authoritative manual on Dravidian architecture (*c.* the 2nd quarter of the 11th cent. A. D.) enjoins that the *kṣidra* (orifice) should be drilled at one of the five (practical) positions in relation to *adhiṣṭhāna* (base) mouldings, namely above the *janma* (sub-plinth), or *jagatī* (plinth course), or (still higher up) above the *kairava* (torus), or (farther up) above the *gala* (recess), or finally above the *paṭṭikā* (fillet) at (the sanctum's) floor-level (which lies over the base-top). A water-spout may then be applied at the orifice from without.[39]

The *Kāśyapaśilpa* (*c.* 13th cent. A. D.), in delineating the characteristics of the *nirmālya-dvāra* (discharge-hole), specifies that in the case of temples having a Pratibandha class of *adhiṣṭhāna,* the hole may be provided at the *prati*-top level, or above the *dala* (lotus or inverted cyma-recta) or the *paṭṭikā* (band) or the *gala* (neck-moulding), or *kumuda* (torus), *vapra* (plinth course), or *pādukā* (sub-plinth); the highest position, if sought, could be the upper *gala* above the base (in the *vedī* of the wall proper).[40]

The *Mānasāra* seems to advocate the point having the same height as the *adhiṣṭhāna* :

yathā adhiṣṭhāna-tuṅgaṁ tat-samaṁ nālodayaṁ bhavet ||19.85"||

The *Ajitāgama* (*c.* mid-11th cent. A. D. or later) also says that the *sthala*

---

[38] I here omit details which include relative proportions of the orifice, the length of the channel, etc. in the discussion.

[39] *Cf. Mayamata*, 19. 23-24.

[40] *Cf, Kāśyapaśilpa*, 8.2.

(location) of the *nālī* has to be above the *kairava*, *gala* or *paṭṭikā*.[41] While the *Kāraṇāgama* prefers the *nālī* jutting out below the *mahāpaṭṭī*.[42]

About the situation of the orifice, *jala-nirgama-cchidra*, the *Ajitāgama*, as well as the *Mayamata*, enjoins that it should be at the north (wall) of the *prāsāda* (temple).[43] So also does prescribe the *Īśānaśivagurudeva-paddhati* (*c.* 12th cent. A. D.), adding that (the hole) has to be in the centre (of the *bhadra*, or central offset)[44] And this is how exactly it is found.[45]

---

41. *Cf.* *Ajitāgama*, 13, 14.

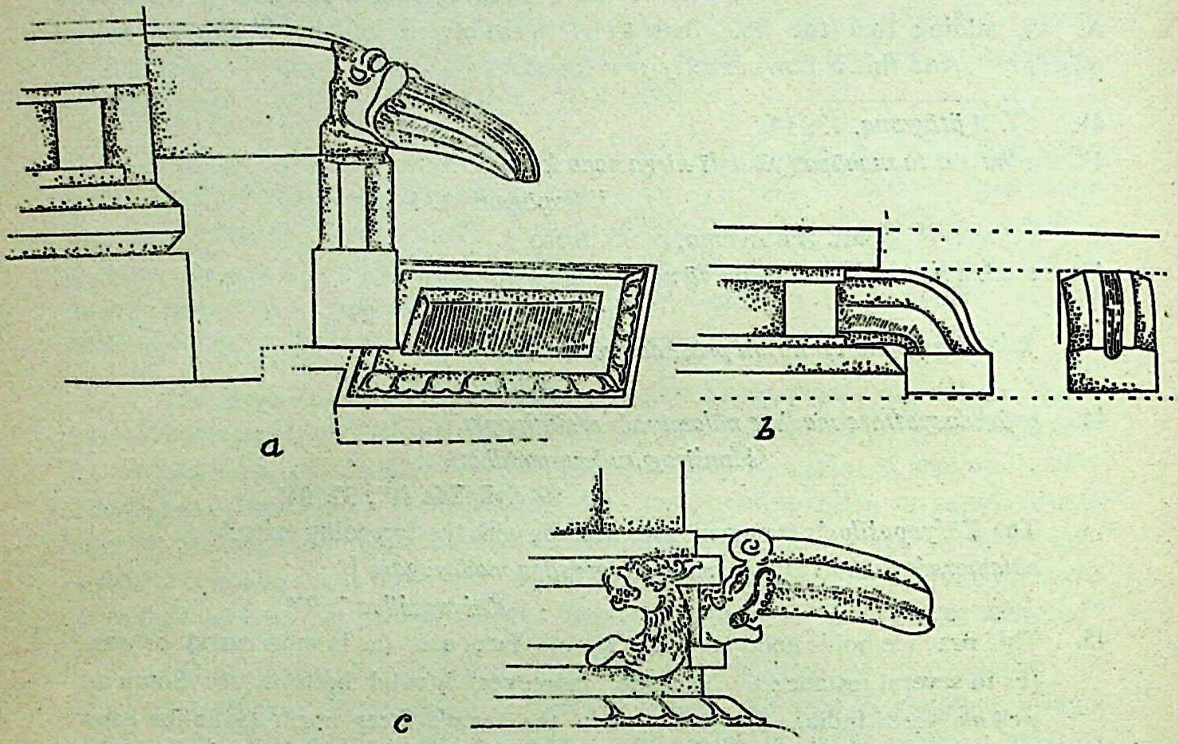
42. *adhastāt tu mahāpaṭṭyā nālī-nirgamana kuru*
Kāraṇāgama I. 5, 33"
(*Cf.* N. R. Bhatt, *Ajitāgama*, p. 90, *infra.*)

43. *evaṁ nālaṁ prakartavyaṁ vāme prāsāda madhyame* |
Mayamata 19, 29'
jala-nirgamana-cchidraṁ prāsādasyottare bhavet |
Ajitāgama 13. 15'

44. *prāsādasyottare madhye nālamevaṁ prakalpayet* ||
Īśānaśivagurudeva-paddhati,
"Kriyāpāda II", 32. 95'
The *Kāśyapaśilpa's* statement also accords with the foregoing texts :
nālamevaṁ prakartavyaṁ saumyaṁ prāsāda-madhyagam ||
Kāśyapaśilpa 7. 9"

45. This practice holds good when the temple faces east (as in most cases) or west (as in several instances). The rule, moreover, is valid both in the South as well as North India. However, when the temple faces north (as in the case sometimes of the Brahmanical goddesses such as the *sapta-mātṛkās*, or the Jaina temples in Western India as at Kumbhāriā (*c.* 11th-13th cent. A. D.) in Northern Gujarat and Sādri (Padmaprabha) and Nāḍol (Ādinātha) (both *c.* late 11th cent. A. D.) in Rājasthān, the *praṇāla* is provided on the eastern wall. This would imply that the *praṇāla* is to be inserted in a wall that comes to the right side of the deity. In fact the *Mānasāra* does include the easterly orientation for the *nāla* :
pūrva-dik cottare vāpi yuktyā nālaṁ prayojayet ||
Mānasāra 19. 83'
In case of the *sarvatobhadra* or *caturmukha* temples, the position of the *praṇāla* would have offered some difficulty.
The French archaeologists designated *praṇāla* or *nāla* as *somasūtra*. Whether there is a textual basis for so naming or such is the current practice in Cambodian parlance is not known. The Indian interpretation of the term *somasūtra* would be "northerly oriented measuring chord, or line." While most *praṇālas*

As for the formal particulars of the *nālī*, brief but very exact as well as graphic descriptions are available in these texts. What the *Mayamata* refers to is an earlier, undeveloped type. The *nāla*, according to this work, has to be faceted *(dhārā-samanvitaṁ)* and (emanate) from *siṁha-vaktra* (lion-head); its lie should be



11. (a) Tiruppaḷanam (Tamiḷnāḍu). Āpatasahāyeśvara temple, *siṁha-nāla* with *kuṇḍī*. Coḷanāḍu style (Early Coḷa), *c*. A. D. 884.

(b) Enadi (Tamiḷnāḍu). Śiva temple, *nāla*. Pāṇḍināḍu style (Coḷa-Pāṇḍya), *c*. late 10th cent. A. D.

(c) Tirunaraiyūr (Tamiḷnāḍu). Siddhanātha temple, *siṁha-nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Middle Coḷa) A. D. 986.

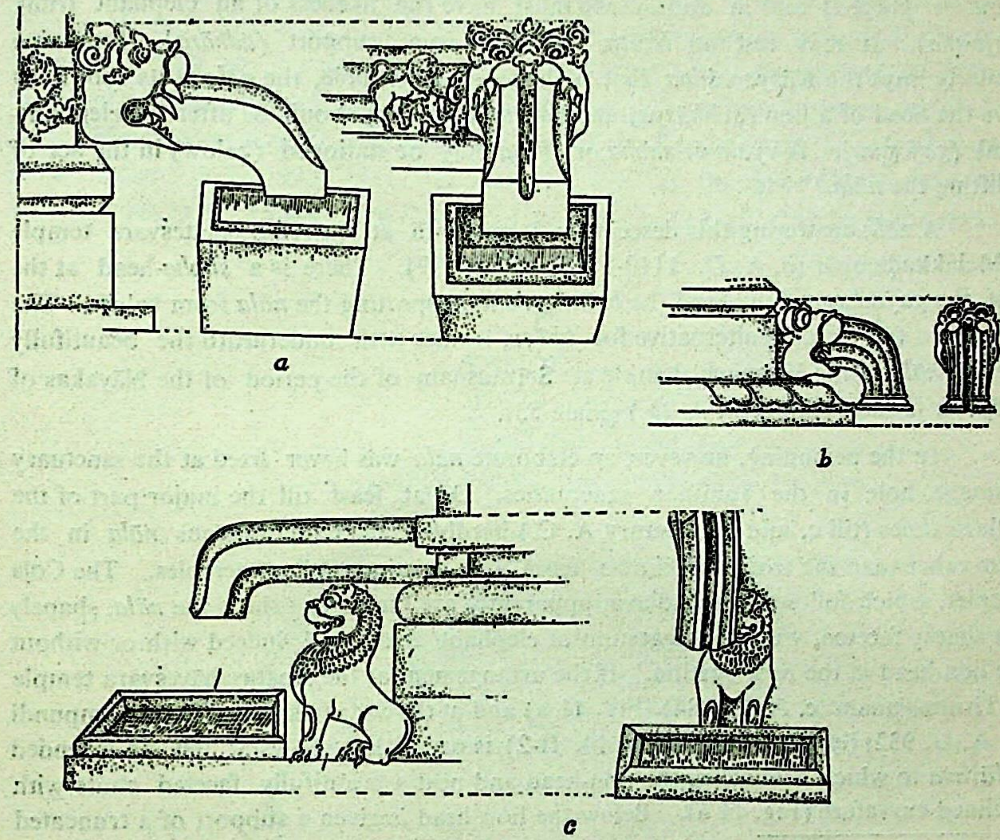
---

are placed *along* the *somasūtra*, the latter term is never equated with *praṇāla*. An earlier *tantra* (*c*. 12th-13th cent. A. D.) quoted in the *Vimarśinī* (*c*. late 15th cent. A. D.) in connection with the *nāla* details, clearly bears out the above-stated observation :

dhāmnaḥ prati grīvaga-somasūtrāt prāg-danta-bhāgaṁ pravidhaya teṣu |

(*Cf*. Malayya, p. 206).

slightly slanting from the point of emanation.[46] According to the *Ajitāgama*, the *jalāyana* (watercourse) and the *khāta* (hollowed portion of the channel) had to be gradually constricted by 1/8 part (of the width), while the *gajādhara* ("elephant



14. (a) Brahmadeśam (Tirunēlveli District, Tamiḷnāḍu). Kailāsanātha temple, *siṁhamukha-nāla*. Pāṇḍināḍu style (Coḷa-Pāṇḍya), *c.* early 11th cent. A. D.

(b) Tirumiyaccūr (Tamiḷnāḍu). Muyarcindeśvara temple complex, Shrine of Gaṇapati, *siṁhamukha-nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Middle Coḷa), *c.* early 11th cent. A. D.

(c) Tirumiyaccūr. Ganapati temple *nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Middle Coḷa), *c.* early 11th cent. A. D.

---

[46] *mūlāt pañca-tri-bhāgaṁ syād agraṁ dhārā-samanvitam |*
ghaṭitaṁ siṁha-vaktreṇa kiñcin-mūlānnatāgrakam ||
evaṁ nālaṁ prakartavyaṁ vāme prāsāda-madhyame |
antaḥpīṭhasya nālasya samaṁ vā bahiriṣyate ||
Mayamata 19. 28-29.

trunk" part of the chute) should have a slight declivity.[47]

The *Karaṇāgama* gives some more particulars. The *nālī* must be made of stone *(śailamayī)*. It should come after the "artificial head" *(kṛtrima-mukha* i. e. *grāsa,* or gorgon) and in appearance must have the likeness of an elephant trunk *(gajoṣṭha)*. It may rest on *bhūta, siṁha* or some support *(ādhāra)*. Enjoining similarly, says the *Kāśyapaśilpa,* that at the front of the hole, the *nāla* at its root must have the head of a lion *(siṁhāsya)* and (the *nāla* proper) should be after the elephant-trunk *(gajoṣṭha)*. A *vyāla* or *siṁha* or *bhūta* may be stationed (below) in the act of uplifting the *nāla.*[48]

A *nāla* answering this description is met with at the Amṛtaghaṭeśvara temple at Melakkaḍambūr (*c.* A. D. 1110-1113) (Plate 29). There is a *siṁha*-head at the root, the *gajādhara*-chute, and the *bhūta*-goblin supporting the *nāla* from below. The figure of a full lion, an alternative for *bhūta,* is met with underneath the beautifully curving *nāla* of the Vaiṣṇava temple at Śrīmuśnam of the period of the Nāyakas of Tañjāvūr (*c.* late 15th cent. A. D.) (Plate 35).

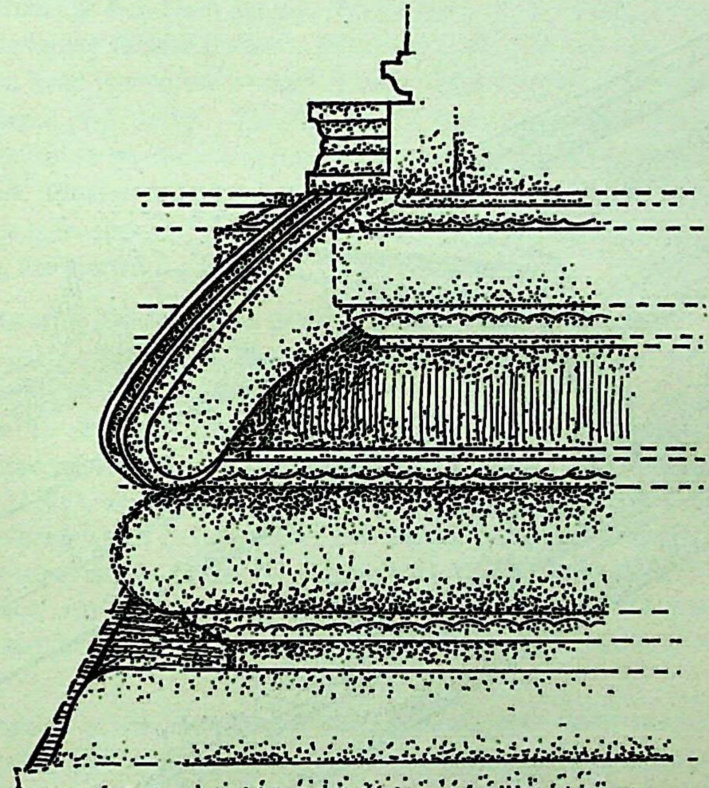
In the beginning, however, an elaborate *nāla* was never fixed at the sanctuary drainage hole in the Tamilian sanctuaries. Or at least till the major part of the Pallava times (till c. mid-9th century A. C.) hardly a contemporaneous *nāla* in the form other than the trough is known from the existing Pallava temples. The Coḷa temples, which followed the Pallava, apparently are the first to show the *nāla,* shapely but simply faceted, with no suggestion of elephant trunk and indeed with or without the lion-head at the root portion. If the arrangement at the Āpatasahāyeśvara temple at Tiruppalanam (*c.* A. D. 884) (Fig. 11 a) and at the Saḍyār-kovil at Tirucenampundi (*c.* A. D. 932) (*cf.* H. Sarkar, Fig. 14, II-2) is original, it shows at first an extended *jalāyana* to which is attached the lion-head and next a beautifully faceted chute with inclined curvature (Fig. 11 a). Below the lion head is given a support of a truncated

---

[47] *tad-vistāra tryaṁśakena madhye kṛtvā jalāyanam |*
tadvat-khātaṁ kramān-mūlāt kṛśatāṣṭāṁśa-varjanāt ||
agre gajādharoṣṭāṁ kiñcit-vinamitaṁ sthalāt |
Ajitāgama 13. 18-19.

[48] *vrajed-bāhye viniṣkrāntāṁ nālīṁ śailamayīṁ tathā ||*
gajoṣṭha sadṛśākāraṁ sa-kṛtrima-mukhottarām |
bhūta-siṁhopagūḍhāṁ vā sādhārāṁ vātha kārayet ||
Kāraṇāgama 1. 5. 54"-55
mūlādagraṁ nataṁ kiñcinmūlaṁ siṁhāsra-bandhitam |
gajoṣṭa-sadṛśā-lambī yathā sundaramācaret ||
vyālo vā siṁha bhūto vā nālaṁ dhṛtvā tu saṁsthitaḥ |
nālameva prakartavyaṁ prāsāda-madhyagam ||
Kāśyapaśilpa 8. 8-9.

liṅga. The *nālas* in Coḷa temples mostly occur from the period of Śembiyan Mahādevī (last quarter of the 10th cent. A. D.) and Rājarāja the Great (*c.* A D. 985-1014)—for example, the one at the Siddhanātha temple at Tirunaraiyūr (*c* A. D. 986) (Fig. 11 c) and the Coḷa-Pāṇḍya temple of Kailāsanātha at Brahmadeśam in Pāṇḍināḍu (*c.* early 11th cent. A. D.) (Fig. 14 a), which shows a powerfully rendered *vyāla*-head with an inornate but subtly shaped and exquisitely finished *nāla.*[49] A short but well-chiselled *nāla* without the lion head on the small temple at Enadi in Upper Pāṇḍināḍu (*c.* A. D. 1000) (Fig. 11 b), or the Kandalīśvara temple at Tenneri in or before A. D. 995) (Fig. 12) or the one at the Śiva Devāle No. 1 at Polonnaruvā in Śri Laṅkā (Late Coḷa : *c.* 12th cent. A. D.) (Fig. 13) are instances of



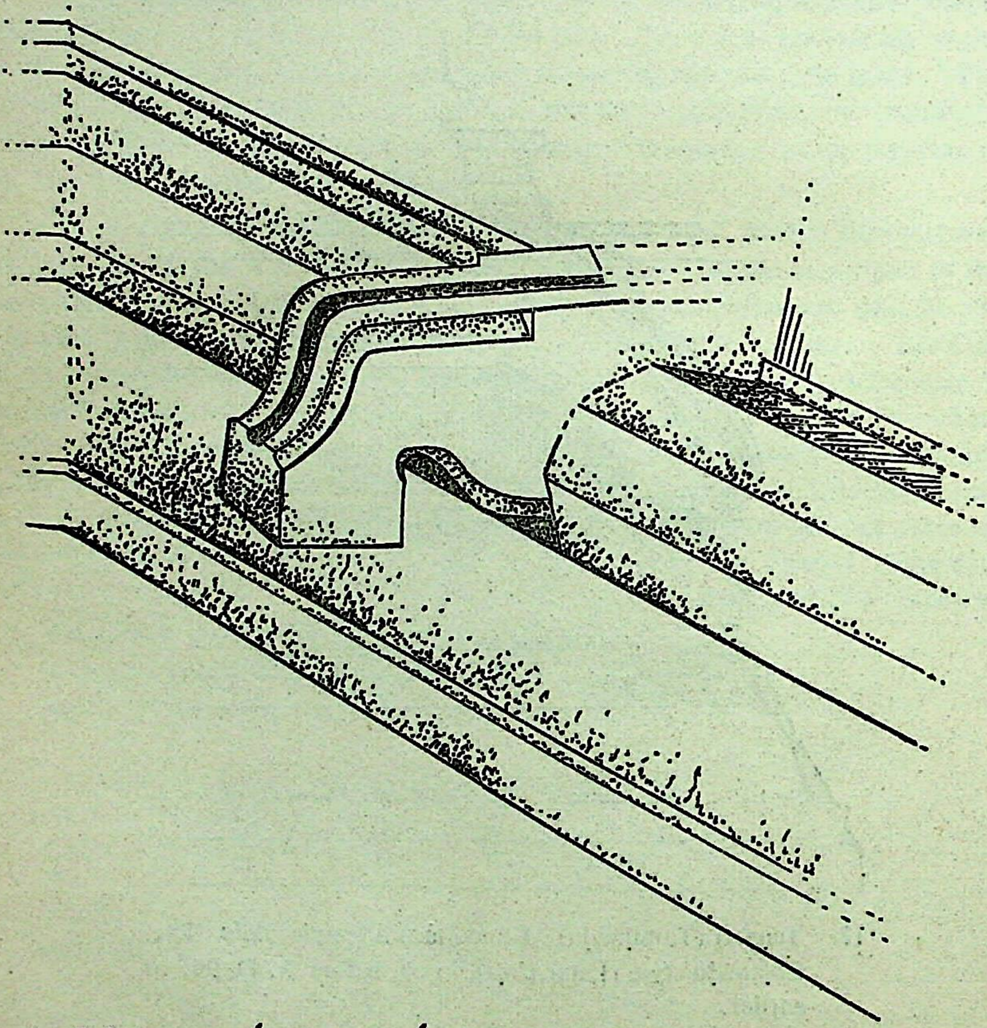
12. Teṇṇeri (Tamiḷnāḍu). Kandalīśvara temple, *nāla*. Late Coḷanāḍu style (Later Coḷa), in or before A. D. 995 or earlier.

---

[49] In principle it seems to follow the early Coḷa tradition.

the undecorated but functional types of *nālas* with good form that had long continued side by side with the decorated ones.

The Coḷa architects, after the end of the tenth century, began to pay more attention to the *nāla* part. At the Sakalabhuvaneśvara temple at Tirumiyacūr, the long, plain, slightly inclining *nāla* with its finely finished broad facets is provided with a shapely bend at the terminal (Fig. 14 c). A lion figure at the bottom (slightly acentric), if original, heralds the beginning of the use of this figure a few years before the figure of a *bhūta* came to be used at that place, the latter seen first at the great Rājarājeśvara temple at Tañjāvūr where the lower portion of the *vimāna* was already comp-



'3. Polonnaruvā (Śrī Laṅkā). Śiva Devāle No. 1, *nāla*. Late Coḷanāḍu style (Later Coḷa), *c.* 12th cent. A. D.

leted before A. D. 1010,[50] a practice within a century was also adopted in Āndhra-Pradeśa in Bhavanārāyaṇa temple at Sarpavaram (*c.* early 12th cent. A. D.); this latter example shows a crouching *bhūta* figure below a *makara-praṇāla* presided over by the figure of a goddess above (Plate 30). Some such early example or perhaps an āgamic prescription may have prompted the sculptors of the grand Coḷa royal foundations to introduce the *bhūta* figure in association with the *nāla* by way of its glorification.[51]

The royal buildings in the Later Coḷa phase seem in fact to have stimulated experimentation in *nāla*-designs. For example, at the main *vimāna* of the Airāvateśvara temple at Dārāsuram founded by Coḷa Rājarāja II in *c.* A. D. 1137-1143, the tube emerging from the lion head, up to a short length, is ornamented with mutulae, whence starts the longer faceted portion, gracefully bent at the end-part and; finally, once again a lion head is attached at the terminal, from whose mouth the water ultimately is discharged (Fig. 15 b). The *nāla* of the contemporaneous Shrine of Consort (Amman Shrine) in the same complex is even more imaginative (Fig. 15 a). The inclined, faceted tubular forepart here is partially converted into figures of two damsels with heads in opposite directions; on a common or coalesced body, from the terminal mouth, are ejected the lustral or ceremonial waters.

Not long after such inventive designs, a new trend seems to have caught the fancy of the sculptors, of casting the *gajādhara-nāla* into a stylised *mṛṇāla-nāla* or *mṛṇālikā* (lotus stalk) by adding more facets to the *nāla* tube, and, by providing a floral appendage to the tip. The beginnings of such trends, although in a solitory example, is noticed in Karṇāṭaka in the Galaganātha temple of the Later Cālukya period (*c.* A. D. 1025), where a long *jalāyana* with *khāta*-channel ends in an elongated lion like *makara*-head which in turn bears a beautifully, almost organically, curved lotiformed *nāla*-tube which seems to suggest the falling water itself.[52] (Plate 33). One other instance, earlier in part noticed, is of the Siṁhācalam temple *praṇāla*, where, between the jaws of the *makara*, is inserted a lotiformed *nāla* bent towards the sink (Plate 10).

The adoption of the multifaceted *nāla* with an open floral ending is noticed in the shrine of Gaṇapati standing to the southwest of the Muyarcindeśvara temple at Tirumiyaccūr (*c.* 11th cent. A. D.) (Fig. 14b). Its short tube takes an elegant L-shaped bend. The Dravidian examples of Vijayanagar in Karṇāṭaka, in the buildings located in the great Viṭṭhalarāya temple complex (*c.* early 16th cent. A. D.), show short *praṇālas* with or without lion heads at the orifice (Plates 31-32); but the tip is now provided with a lotus bud. This type is carried further in the Tiruppaṭṭūr temples, main and of Amman, in Tamiḷnāḍu (Fig. 15 c & d). By Nāyaka times this became a universal form, spreading like wild fire everywhere. It is there in the Sattainātha temple at Sirgāḷi, the Vedagirīśvara temple at Tirukaḷikuṇṇram, the Kumbheśvara at Kumbhakoṇam and Svāminātha temple at Swāmimalai examples (Fig. 16a-d), the tube up to a short distance, showing calyx like mutulae (as at Śrīmuśnam also), a memory of Dārāsuram invention. (The Sirgāḷi and Svāmimalai

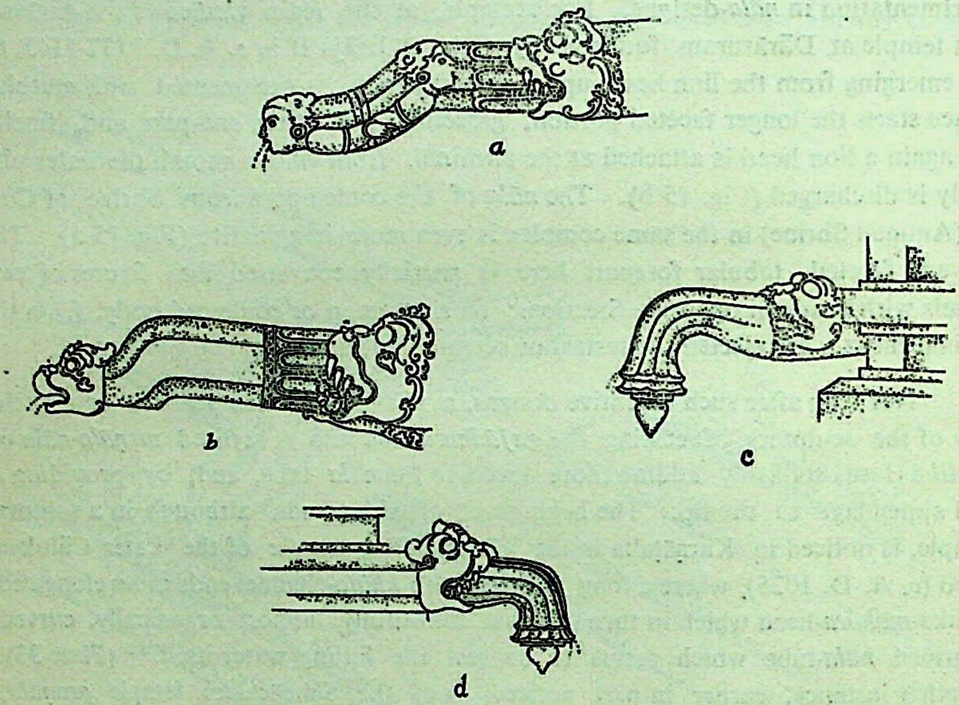
---

[50] It is in two stages, the first trough is supported by a *bhūta* figure.

[51] Neither, however, is known at present.

[52] This was the response of Doris Chatham when she saw the photograph. I completely concur with her perception.

20



15. (a) Dārāsuram (Tamiḷnāḍu). Airāvateśvare temple complex, Daivanāyakī Amman shrine, *siṁha-nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Late Coḷa), *c.* A. D. 1146-1172. (Courtesy : S. Dorai Raj).

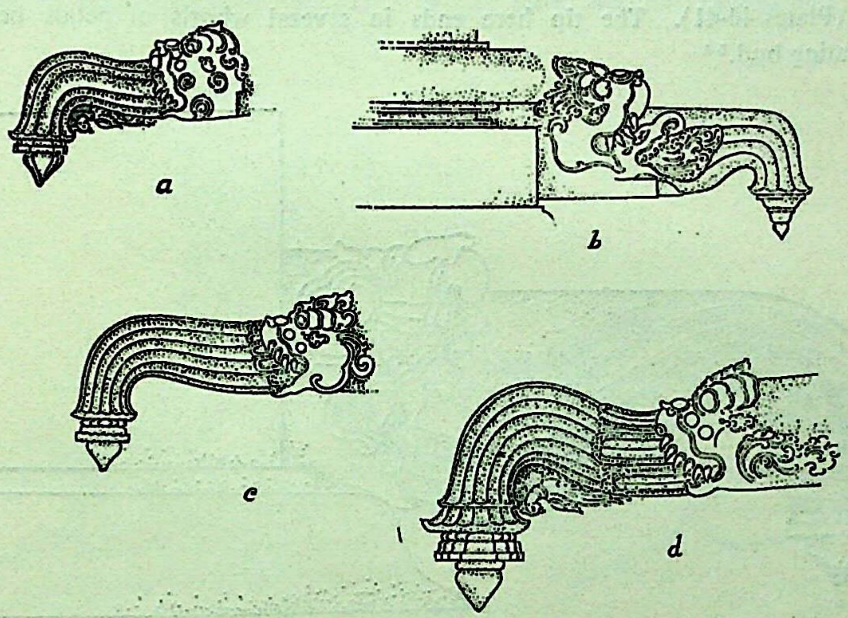
(b) Dārāsuram. Airāvateśvara temple, *vimāna*, *siṁhamukha-nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Late Coḷa), *c.* A. D. 1146-1172. (Courtesy : S. Dorai Raj).

(c) Tirupaṭṭūr (Tamiḷnāḍu). Varadarāja Perumāḷ temple complex, Shrine No. 1, *siṁha-nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Middle Coḷa), *c.* 11th cent. A. D.

(d) Tirupaṭṭūr. Varadarāja Perumāḷ temple complex, Amman shrine, *siṁha-nāla*. Coḷanāḍu style (Middle Coḷa), *c.* 11th cent. A. D.

examples show parakeets attached at the tube's bottom. In the Tañjāvūr Nāyaka temples, parakeets are typically present at the padma-endings at angles in the *adhiṣṭhānas*).

The Nāyaka type of lotiform *nāla* became so popular that even the earlier temples, where *nālas* originally may have been of the unpretentious trough type, were replaced by the now ubiquitous ornate lotiform variety. Of these the Tiruvakkarai main shrine (originally a Pallava foundation, rebuilt in Rājarāja I's times), and the *vimāna* of the main shrine of Dharasanguppe (probably of Middle Coḷa times), are the most salient examples (Fig. 17 and Plate 34).[53] The Dharasanguppe example also shows a lion figure underneath the *nāla*; the *bhūta* seems to have gone out of fashion after the late Coḷa times.



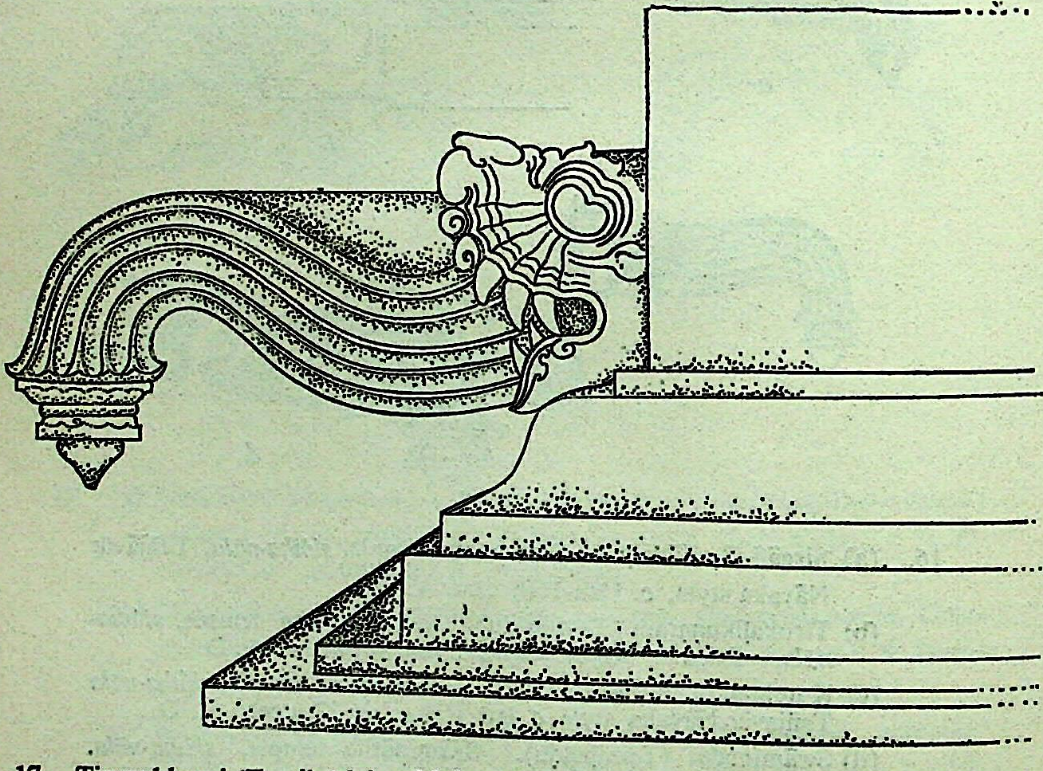
16. (a) Sirgāḷi (Tamiḷnāḍu). Sattainātha temple, *siṁha-nāla*. Tañjāvūr Nāyaka style, *c*. 15th-16th cent. A. D.
(b) Tirukaḷikuṉṉram (Tamiḷnāḍu). Vedagirīśvara temple, *siṁha-nāla*. Tañjāvūr Nāyaka style, *c*. late 16th cent. A. D.
(c) Kumbhakonam (Tamiḷnāḍu). Kumbheśvara temple, *siṁha-nāla* Tañjavūr Nāyaka style, *c*. late 16th-early 17th cent. A. D.
(d) Swāmimalai (Tamiḷnāḍu). Svāminātha temple, *siṁha-nāla*. Tañjavūr Nāyaka style, *c*. late 16th-early 17th cent. A. D. (Courtesy : a-d, S. Dorai Raj).

---

[53] To the lateness of the Tiruvakkarai *nāla*, my attention had been drawn by H. Sarkar several years ago. My studies on *praṇālas*, then, were still in infancy while his had considerably progressed.

The faceting process for the *nāla* was taken to its extreme in the example from the famous Subrahmaṇya temple added in the Rājarājeśvara temple complex in Nāyaka times. The *nāla's* exterior (Plate 38) is covered with too many thin flutes and ribs, almost converting it into a ribbed rubber hose-pipe !

In the Malanāḍ hill tracts, the Nāyakas of Ikkeri and the Keladi chiefs built some magnificent temples, that of the Aghoreśvara temple at Ikkeri, the capital, shows the *nāla* covered with long shallow petal-like flutings; the lion-head at the root is surrounded by a *toraṇa*, and a panel bearing a Gaṇeśa figure comes below the *toraṇa*, both applied on the *adhiṣṭhāna*-face (Plate 39). The contemporaneous Aghorīśvara temple complex at Keladi in this region possesses interesting examples of *nālas* which seem to be the results of the craft of carpentry rather than the handiworks of a stone carver (Plates 40-41). The tip here ends in several whorls of petals before the terminating bud.[54]



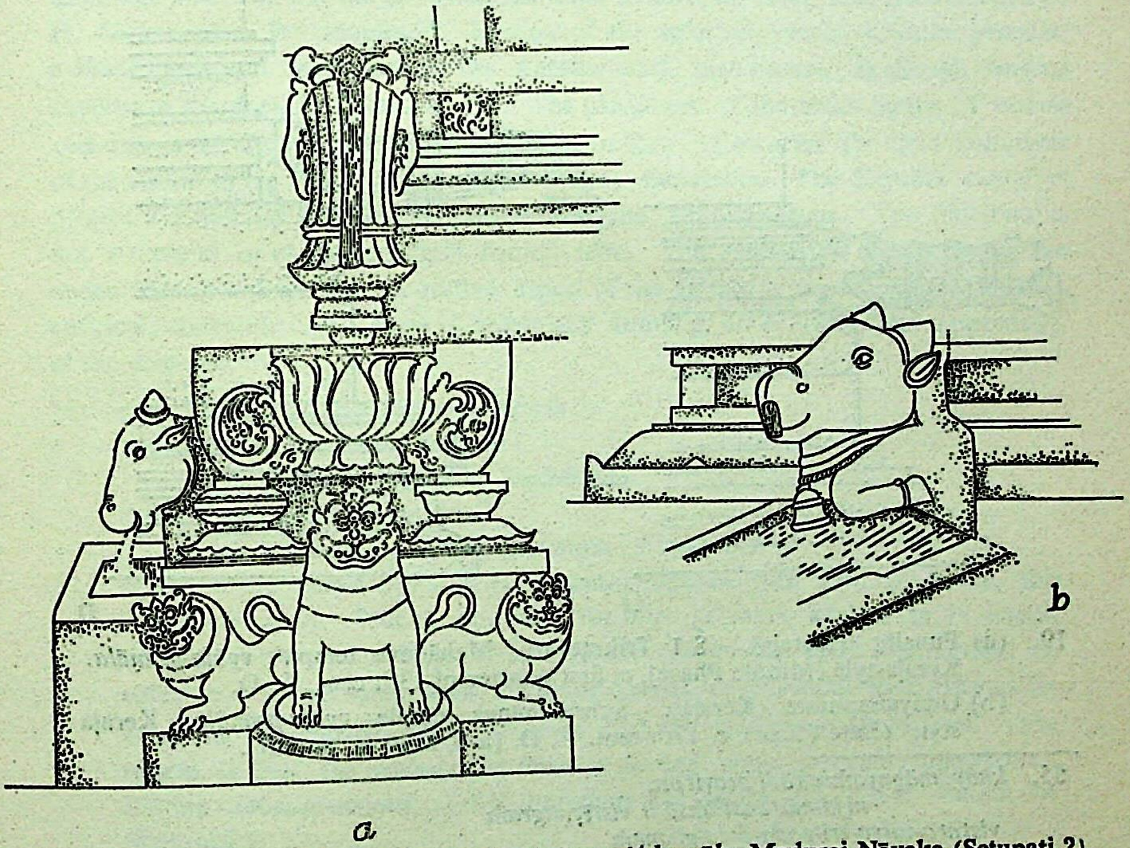
17. Tiruvakkarai (Tamiḷnāḍu). Main shrine in Candramaulīśvara group, *siṁha-nāla* Tañjāvūr Nāyaka style, *c.* 16th cent. A. D.

---

[54] The Pārśvanātha temple at Bilgi also possesses this type of *nāla*. (*Cf.* Henry Cousens, p. 108, Fig. 36.)

A new variation in the Nāyaka period, though not frequently encountered, is the deployment of a full *vyāla* figure in place of the *mṛṇāla-nāla*. The water-chutes at the temple of Amman in the Kalakāḍu group (Plate 37) as well as at the splendid Bhaktavatsalam temple at Śermādevī (Plate 36), both in Tamiḷnāḍu, show a powerful *vyāla* leaping from the mouth of the lion at the orifice: and the *vyāla*, in each case, disgorges the end portion of the lotiform *nāla*.

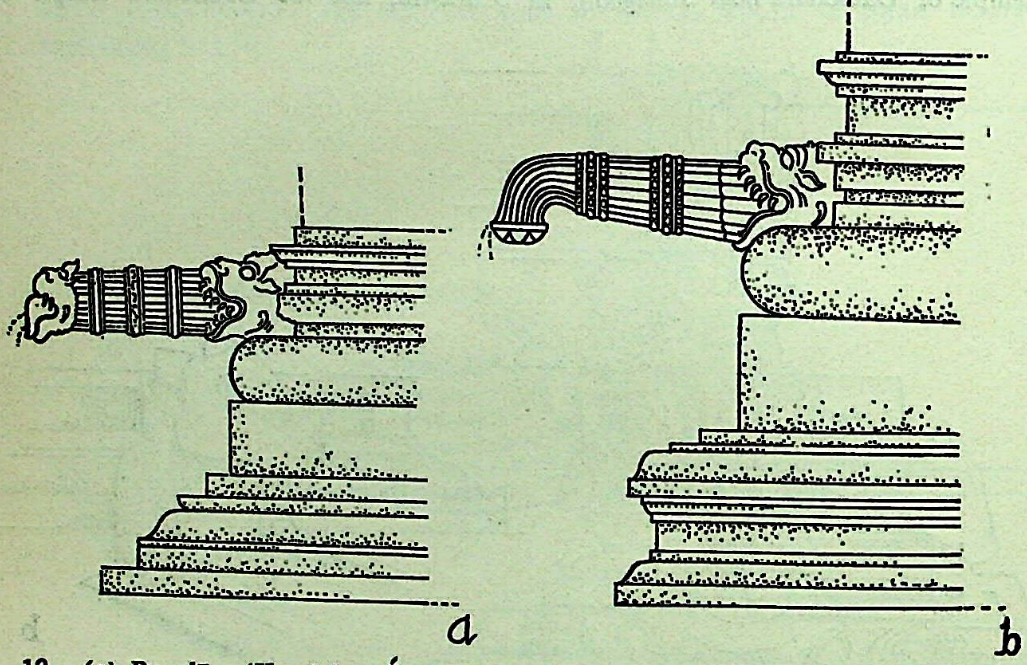
Though not recorded as such in the texts, in Vijayanagar times or a little earlier, as at Śrī Kākulam temple in Āndhra Pradeśa, a *nandi*-bust is featured as a water-chute (Fig. 18b); this type, however, is not frequently met with. (In Western India, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a head of a cow served the same function. The old temple of Mādhavarāya near the sea-shore at Mādhavpur and the temple of Dāmodara near Junāgaḍh, in Saurāstra, and the Gadādhara temple at



18. (a) Āvaḍayarkoil (Tamiḷnāḍu). Main *vimāna*, *siṁha-nāla*. Madurai Nāyaka (Setupati ?) style.*c*. late 15th or early 16th cent. A. D.
(b) Śrīkākulam (Āndhra Pradeśa). Koṭeśvara temple, *Nandi-praṇāla*. Vijayanagar style, *c*, 15th cent. A. D.

Śāmalājī in Northern Gujarāt, all Viṣṇuite temples, are the more important examples illustrating this feature).

The Keralite conception of *praṇāla* somewhat differs from the Tamilian as attested by the *vāstu* works as well as the actual examples. The *Tantrasamucaya* of Nārāyaṇa (*c.* the 3rd quarter of the 15th cent. A. D.), a Keralite work, recommends the insertion of the *praṇāla* at the end of either *prati* or *gala* of the *adhiṣṭhāna*. It further refers to the *ambumārga* (water-channel) and the formal details of *praṇāla*. The water-chute should be after *śuṇḍu* or elephant-trunk shape, emerging as it should from the *vyālānana* (head of the *vyāla*) and ornamented (in the middle) by circular belts of pearl-swags and wine designs. At the terminal it must have the face of a cow.[55]



19. (a) Punalūr (Keraḷa). Śrī Trikoṭevara Mahādeva temple, *vyāla-praṇāla*. Keraḷastyle (Middle Phase), *c.* first quarter of 13th cent. A. D.
(b) Udayanapuram (Keraḷa). Subrahmaṇya temple, *vyāla-praṇāla*. Keraḷa style (Late Phase), *c.* 17th cent. A. D. (a-b, after H. Sarkar).

---

[55] *khāyāmāgnyaṁśakādi pravitata*
nija-mūlānalāṁsādi vistīṛṇāgraṁ
vistāra-tulya-tri-pada-dala-ghanaṁ
trayaṁśa-klṛptāmbumārgam |
vyakta-vyālāsya-madhya-prasṛmara-nija-
mūlojjvalaṁ gomukhaṁ tan-muktā-dāmādi-vallī-valaya-
parigataṁ śuṇḍubhirmaṇḍitaṁ ca ||
Tantrasamuccaya 2. 22.

In the commentary *Vimarśinī* of Nārāyaṇa's son Śaṅkara on the *Tantrasamuccaya* is quoted a passage on *praṇāla* from some earlier Śivaite *tantra* of Keralite tradition, datable possibly to the 12th or 13th century A. D. It also refers to the *śuṇḍubheda* form of the *praṇāla* emerging from the *vyālānana* and ornamened by *maṇi* (gems) and *valli* (wine) patterns.[56] The *ambumārga* is explained as *jalayātrāmārga* (water-course) by Śaṅkara. It is to be hidden inside the wall.

The actual examples of *praṇāla* from the medieval Kerala temples fully reflect the content and intent of the texts (Fig. 19 a & b). The *praṇālas*, assuredly, are fixed either at the upper end of the *gala* or *prati*.[57] Also, they proceed from the head of the *vyāla*; the *nāla* portion proper *(śuṇḍu)* is a ribbed tubular member with a constricted end. The central portion of the tube is decorated by circular belts of gems and wine. The terminal in most cases seems to bear a *grāsa*-mask with narrow discharge hole, and not the *gomukha;* the latter feature, however, has been noticed by H. Sarkar at a few temples.[58] In some of the relatively early Keralite *praṇālas* a *bhūta* figure, not mentioned by the Keralite texts, also occurs, as though lending support to the *praṇāla* (Plates 43-45). The placement of the *bhūta* figure, of course was due to the Coḷa influence that infiltered in that region after the Coḷa conquests of the region in the times of Rājarāja I and his successors. The Keralite examples present a distinctive and striking variation of the Tamilian type. The difference is not structural or of the principal formal idea. The noticeable change is in the appearance as well as the decorative aspect of the discharge pipe. And that looks strikingly different. Also, there is rarely any bending, or a lotus bud appendage, at the drip-end.[59]

---

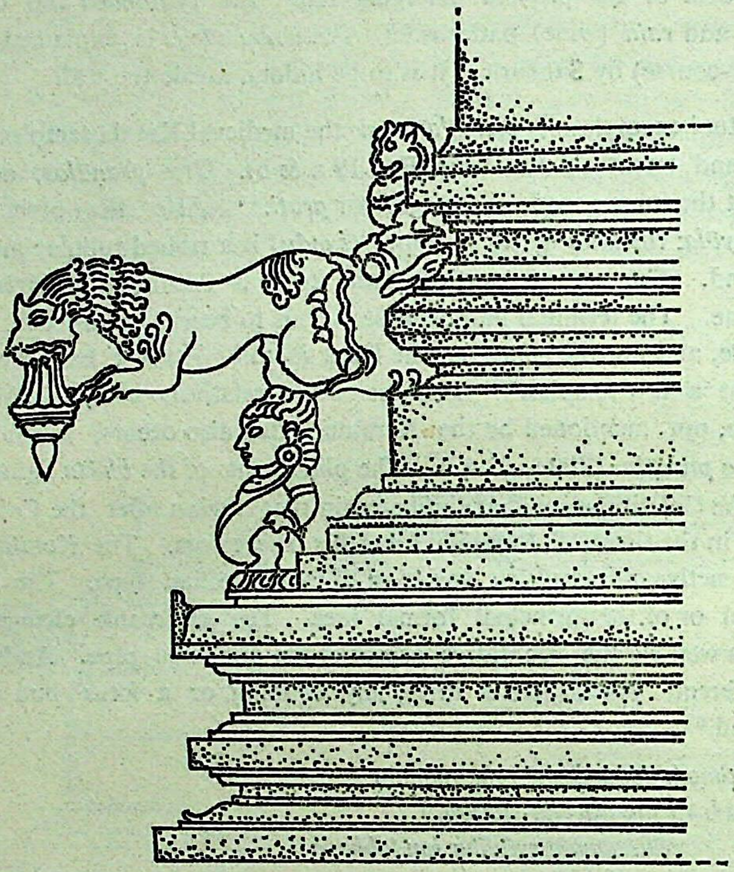
56. *syāt kuṭṭimaṁ gomukha-dīrgha-mānaṁ*
pādonitaṁ vā tadayārdha-yuktam |
vyālānanaṁ syādiha śuṇḍubhedo
maṇiśca vallī-pariśobhitaṁ ca ||
(Tantra Quotation : *Vimarśinī)*

57. Wherever the *vimāna* building is contemporaneous with the *liṅga* inside, this rule holds good. Where, however, the *liṅga* is more ancient as in several early Coḷa stone buildings (which replaced the earlier brick foundations) the *nālas* were coordinated with the lower courses of the *adhiṣṭhāna*, even as far down as the *jagatī* or *upāna* to agree with the *garbhagṛha* floor-level. (The reason is that the consecrated *liṅga* is looked upon as *acala* (immovable). During reconstructions of old buildings the established *liṅgas* cannot be disturbed.)

58. *Cf.* Sarkar, pp. 92-93.

59. *Cf.* Plates 43-45. Incidentally, in central Jāvā, a magnificent *pīṭhikā* of a Śiva-*liṅga* which originated either from the temple of Caṇḍi Nagasari or Krapjak

One notable example at the Rāmeśvara temple at Quilon (Fig. 20) strongly resembles the Śermādevī and Karkāḍu examples from Tamilnāḍu, earlier noticed (Plates 36-37). The full length *vyāla* in the Keralite instance likewise leaps from



20. Quilon (Kollam, Keraḷa). Śrī Rameśvara temple, *vyāla-praṇāla.* Keraḷa style (Late Phase), *c.* A. D. 1337-1343. (After H. Sarkar).

---

near Prambanam (*c.* 9th-10th cent. A. D.), possesses an extraordinarily elegant *nāla.* It is shaped after a *hastihasta*-banister, the basic type earlier known both in the Deccan and the Southern India and, for that matter, in several countries of the Indic Asia. Each side of this Javanese *nāla* shows, at its point of emergence, on its fronton, a head of a *grāsa.* A very handsome *nāga* or *sarpa-vyāla* bust supports the *nāla, Cf.* A. J. Bernet-Kempers, Plate 166; here Fig. 25). A pair of *grāsa*-masks (instead of a single *grāsa*-head) and the *nāga* or *sarpavyāla* instead of *bhūta* or *siṁha* presupposes an interesting variation of the South Indian form, indeed far more imaginative and elegant than the Indian parallels.

the lion's head, its jaws also grasp the lotiform terminal. However, an additional presence here of a typically Keraḷite *bhūta* figure below the *vyāla* and a second small *vyāla*-bust above the head are features not found in the corresponding Nāyaka instances of Tamilnāḍu.

Receptacles

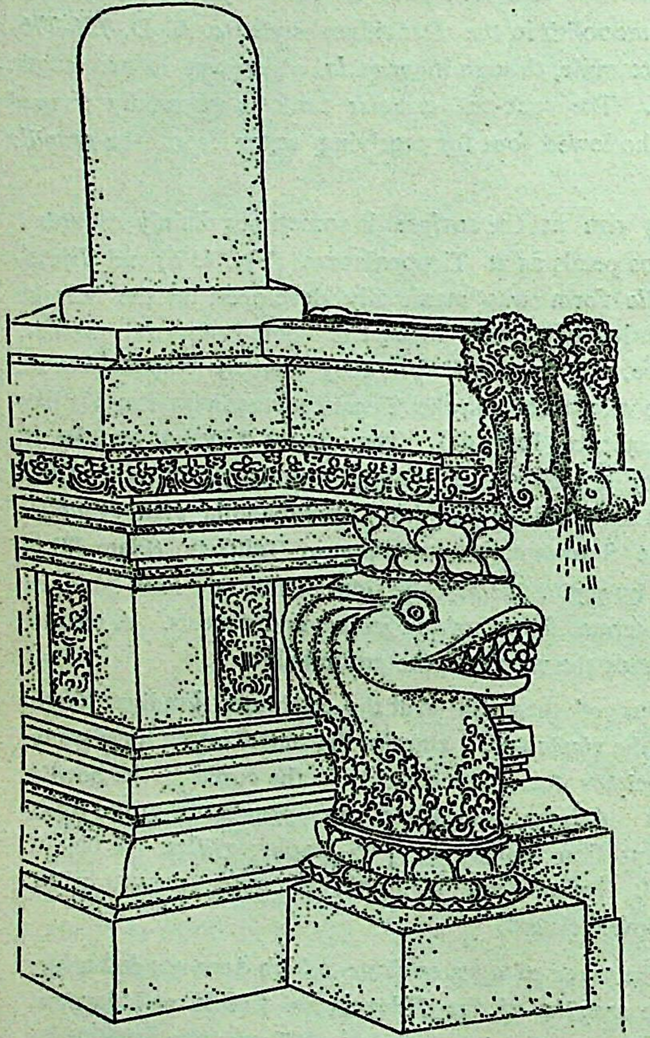
In Northern India, sink or tank, or receptacle for the lustral water is generally absent, or, if at all present, is too ordinary to take note of. In Southern India, however, sufficient attention sometimes had been paid to this object. The Kailāsa temple at Ellorā, the Rāṣṭrakūṭa monolith in the Dravidian style (*c.* A. D. 756-776), shows perhaps the earliest such example, though its *praṇāla*, which was in two stages. is much too damaged (Plate 42). The rock-cut circular tank is externally shaped after a *pīṭhikā* of a liṅga, but hollowed out for receiving water from the *praṇāla* above.

The sink's (or cistern's) rim at the surface is sometimes plainly moulded, sometimes even decorated by lotus petals as at Tiruppalanam (Fig. 11 a) and Vijayanagar (Plate 32). When the *nāla* form was maximally developed in the Nāyaka times, the tanks, too, were pretentiously treated, at least in some instances. Earlier, at Brahmadeśam, is noticed a fine, utterly simple but very shapely trapezoid tank, the abstraction of which seems to reincarnate in the elegant octagonal palm-pot like tank of the Keladi temple in Karṇāṭaka (Plate 41). The ornate Nāyaka temples in Tamilnāḍu went still further. For example, the slightly rectangular cistern of the Śrīmuśnam *vimāna* has sides that are moulded like the Kapotabandha class of *adhiṣṭhāna* (Plate 35). The tank of the Subrahmaṇyam temple in Tañjāvūr (Plate 38) is lifted from the ground pavement by sejant *vyālas*, the sides of this glorious tank are moulded and decorated with acroterian figures of musicians and dancers. A second *nāla* going down from the tank leads the waters to the ground-sink.

Perhaps the most gorgeous of them all is at the celebrated Āvaḍiyar Kovil (Fig. 18 a). Here the *nāla* from the *vimāna-vedī* empties the water into a huge stone bowl placed on moulded *padmapīṭhas* (acting as steads) at the corners; the bowl's own surfaces are richly decorated. A large, full blown lotus projects from the front of the bowl, below which is a sejant lion flanked by two leaping *vyālas*. A Nandi spout occurs one side of the bowl. From Nandi's mouth, the water received in the bowl passes next into the lower simple cistern.

A concluding note may be taken of a water-chute which does not fall under any class so far noticed. It is the *praṇāla* of the Udayeśvara temple at Udayapur (*c.* A. D. 1080) (Madhya Pradeśa), a grand royal temple in Mālava style founded by Paramāra Udayāditya of Mālavadeśa. What is glorified here is the rectangular drain-trough proper whose sides are carved with chequer designs, human figures and *ratna*-diamonds in panels on the longer sides, and an unprominently doue *gaṇa* on the face. This long but nicely proportioned water-chute is adequately supported by a beautifully moulded and decorated pilaster (Plate 28).

The *praṇāla* generally was inserted at the *bhadra*-face of the *vimāna*; but there are instances where it was applied at *upabhadra* (as in Udayapur) or the next neighbouring member, as at Gwālior Teli-kā-mandir, Nemināthа temple at Kumbhāriā (*c.* A. D. 1134), Ādinātha temple at Khajurāho and other places. In the North it was usually applied at the *khura* level of the *vedibandha* of the wall.[60]



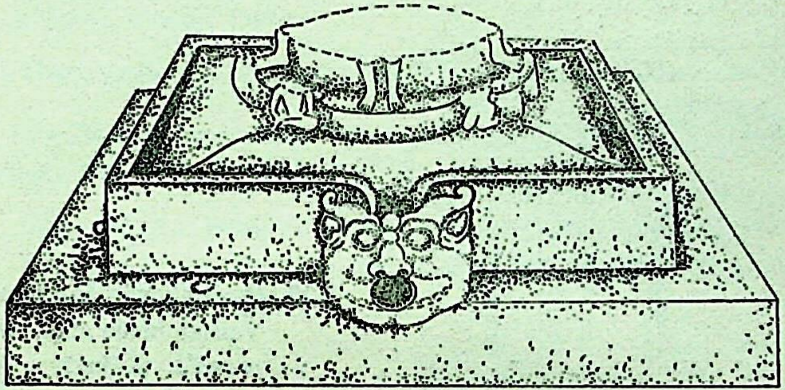
25. Prambanam (area), Jāvā, Indonesia. *Grāsa-praṇāla.* *C.* 9th-10th cent. A. D.

---

[60] However, this rule was sometimes not observed, as in the case of the Śiva temple at Koṭāi in Kutch (*c.* mid 10th cent. A. D.), where the *praṇāla* is inserted at the *kaṇṭha* level in the *vedibandha*.

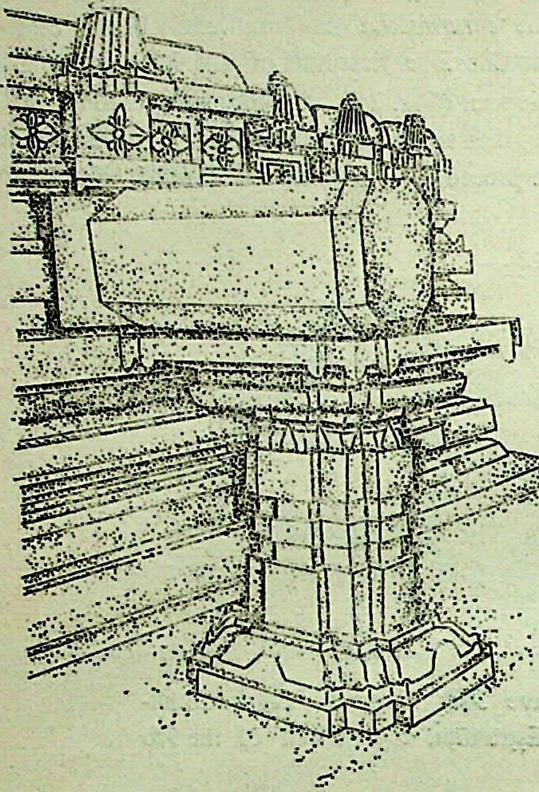
SUPPLEMENTUM

Not many examples of *praṇāla* of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa period are available. The one carved with the rock-cut *pīṭhikā* of the *caturmukha* Jina (mutilated) in the centre of the unfinished Jaina Cave No. 30 B at Ellorā (*c*. first half of the 9th cent. A. D.) clearly shows *grāsamukha* as the drain-spout (Fig. 26), an indicator, along with perhaps the one from the Kailāsa temple, that the *grāsapraṇāla* was favoured in the Rāṣṭrakūṭa temples as much as in the preceding early eighth century Calukyan temples.



26. Ellorā (Mahārāṣṭra). Caturmukha-*pīṭhikā, grāsa-praṇāla*. Rāṣṭrakūṭa, c. first half of the 9th cent. A. D.

In the Kākatīya temples of the Tailaṅgana region (*anc*. Triliṅga), Āndhra Pradeśa, a type analogous to the Udayapura (Mālava) example (*cf*. plate 28) was used for the more pretententious buildings. For example the western shrine of the Tripuruṣa temple (now called Vaistambhāla guḍi) at Hanamkoṇḍa (*anc*. Anumkoṇḍa),—the temple founded by the Kākatīya king Rudradeva in A. D. 1162,—possesses a plain sided rectangular trough with blind face-end supported below by a moulded prop whose hollowed interior acted as a pipe leading the water to the *upapīṭha* below (Fig. 27); from there, via a covered passage over the *upapīṭha* (platform), it was discharged outside by a plain trough (attached to latter's upper *kaṇṭha* moulding) with an opening in front. Apparently (the so-called) Rāmappā at Pālampet, founded in A. D. 1213 by Recarala Rudra, a devout *daṇḍanāyaka* (general) of the Kākatīya emperor Gaṇapatideva, also had the same type of *praṇāla* organization, though the trough proper today is missing. Incidentally, one of the three sancta of the Hanamkoṇḍa temple shows the trough with *makara* figure carved in low relief on either side, a "throw back", so to speak, recalling the Mathurā predecessors (*cf*. Fig. 1 b & c). The Kākatīya *praṇālas* proper are normally plain rectangular channel blocks as are several Hoysaḷa examples.*



27. Hanamkoṇḍa (Āndhra Pradeśa). Vaistambhāla guḍi, west shrine, *praṇāla*. Kākatīya, A. D. 1162.

Some months after the article was in press, the AIIS (Varanasi Cen er) added some more photographs of *praṇālas* from a few new sites in Karṇāṭaka. Among them the one from a temple, now almost completely destroyed, is a rare variety exemplifying a *vṛṣa-praṇāla*. The head of the Nandi and his neck-ornaments are schematically done. The water channel cuts across his body, ending in circular opening of the mouth. Stylistically the *praṇāla* could be as early as the seventh or eighth century. The other example is from the Siddheśvara temple at Kaḷagi. A handsomely shaped squarish trough with slightly tapering roundish bottom is ornamented on its either flanks by vigorously done *makara* mounted by the *Udadhi-kumāra* and consort. The elegant drain-hole is sandwitched between the *makara* heads. The temple to which the *praṇāla* pertains is in Seüṇa-kuntala style of *c.* end of the 11th century A. D.

---

* The photographic illustrations reproduced in this article are mostly due to the generous assistance of the American Institute of Indian Studies. Shri Dorai and Shri Dorairaj of the Institute made the drawings for this article in their spare time; so did Shri V. K. Venkatavardhan carefully type the press-copy. The author wishes to thank them all.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Original Sources

Southern

Ajitāgama (Vol. I), .(Ed. N. R. Bhatt), Publications de l' Institut Francais d' Indologie No. 24, Pondichéry 1964.

Īśānaśiva-gurudeva-paddhati (Ed. T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī), Part III and IV, Trivandrum Sanskrit Series No. LXXVI and LXXXIII, Trivandrum 1922 and 1925.

Kāraṇāgama (Ed. Sivana Napotayantrasalai), Vol. I, (Pūrva), Madras 1921; Vol. II (Uttara), Madras 1901.

Kāśyapaśilpa (Ed. Vinayak Ganesh Apte), Poona 1926.

Mayamata (Part I), (Ed. Bruno Dagens), Publications de l' Institut Francais d' Indologie No. 40-41, Pondichéry 1970.

Mānasāra (Ed. Prasanna Kumar Acharya), Oxford-Bombay 1932.

Tantrasamuccaya (Part 1), (Ed. T. Gaṇapati Śāstrī), 3 vols, Nos. 151, 169, 200, Trivandrum 1945-1962.

Northern

Aparājitapṛcchā (Ed. Popatbhai Ambashakar Mankad), Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. CXV, Baroda 1950.

Samarāṅgaṇa-sūtradhāra (Ed. T. Ganapati Śāstrī, sec. ed., *ed.* Vasudeva Saran Agrawal), Gaekwad's Oriental Series, No. 25, Baroda 1966.

Vāstuśāstra of Viśvakarmā (mss. late Shri Prabhashankar O. Sompura's collection).

Vāstuvidyā of Viśvakarmā (mss. late Shri Prabhashankar O. Sompura's collection).

Modern writings

India

N. V. Mallayya, *Studies in Sanskrit Texts on Temple Architecture with special reference to the Tantra Samuccaya*, Calicut 1949.

H. Sarkar, *An Architectural Survey of Temples of Kerala*, New Delhi 1978.

Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist & Hindu Periods)*, Bombay 1965.

South East Asia

A. J. Bernet Kempers, *Ancient Indonesian Art*, Cambridge (Massachusetts) 1959.

Jean Boisselier, *Asie du Sud-Est, Tome I, Le Cambodge*, Paris 1966.

Jean Boisselier, *La Statuaire du Champa*, Paris 1963.

Henri Michal, *Le Décor et la Sculpture Khmers*, Paris 1951.

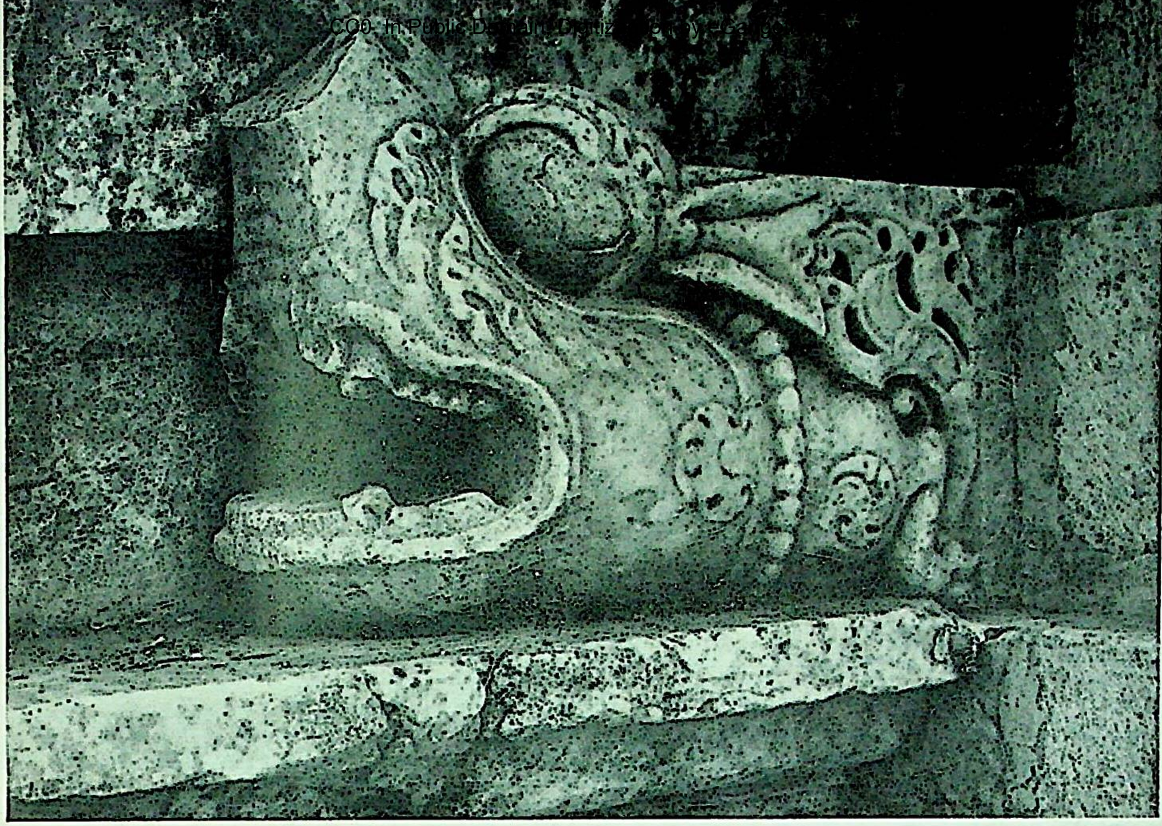
H. Parmentier, *Inventaire Descriptif des Monuments Cams de L' Annam*, Tome II, Paris 1918.

Greece

A. W. Lawrence, *Greek Architecture*, Sec. Ed., Middlesex 1967.

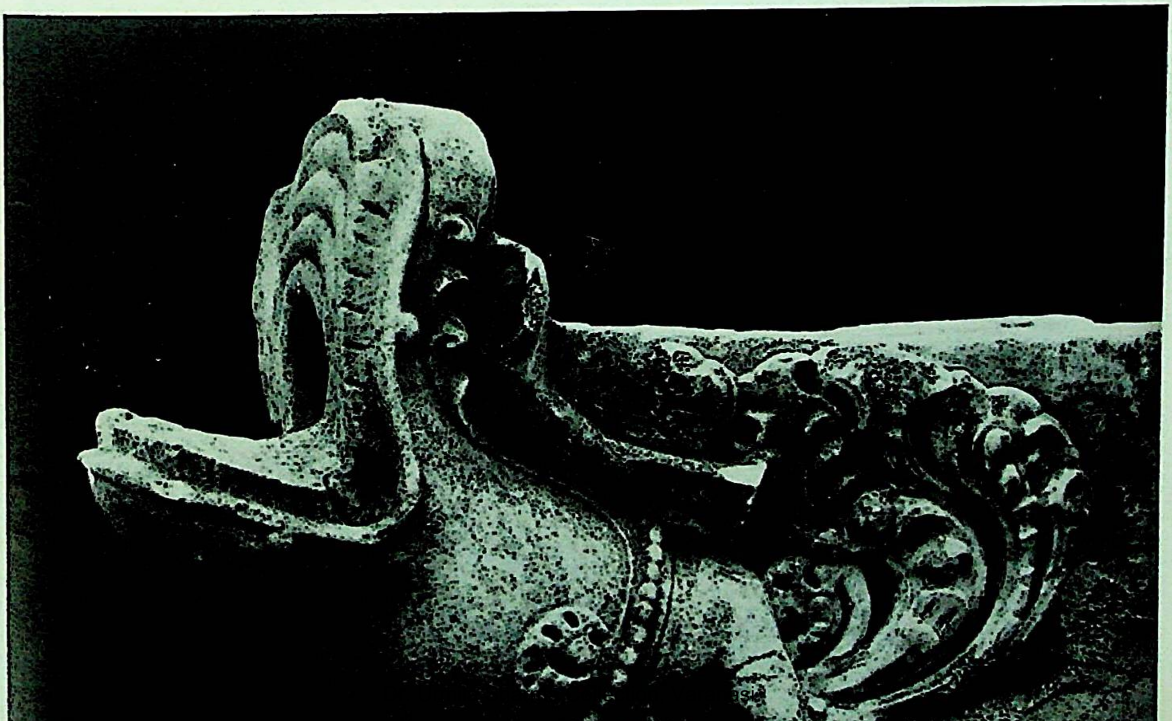
Helmut Berve and Gottfried Gruben, *Greek Temples Theatres and Shrines*, London 1963.

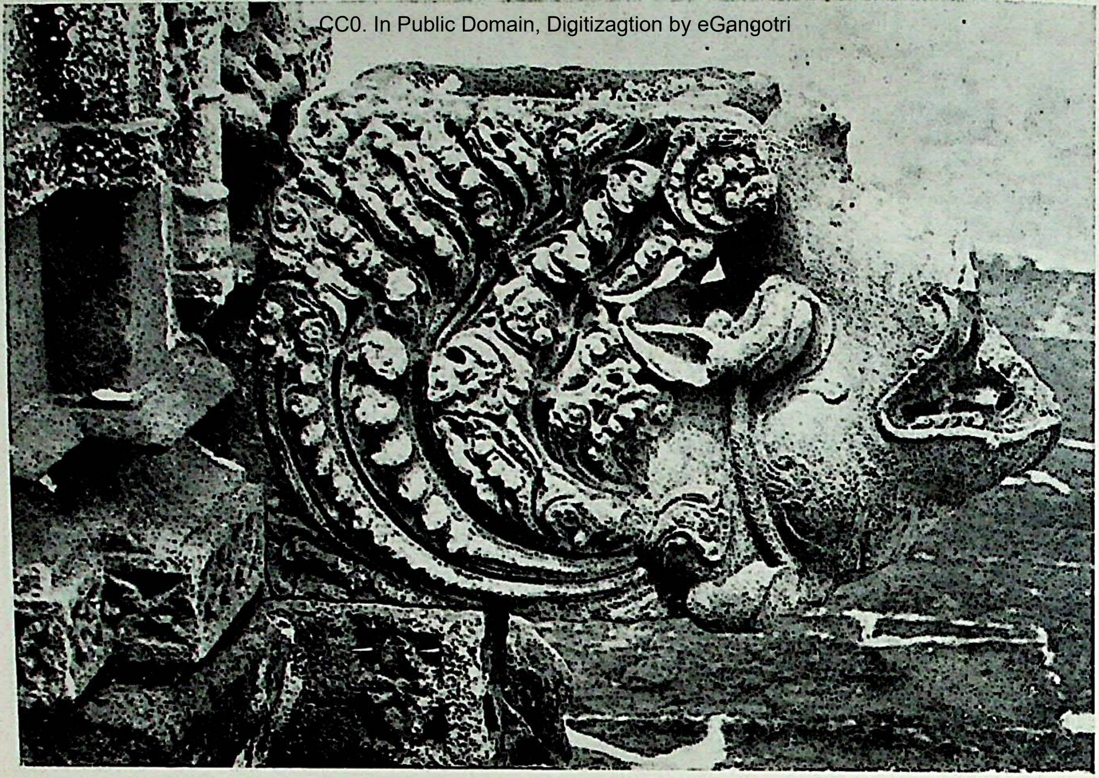
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitized by eGangotri



1. Kumbhāriā (Northern Gujarāt). Mahāvīra temple, *jagatī*, *makara-praṇāla*. Maru-Gūrjara style (Caulukya), *c*. A.D. 1062.

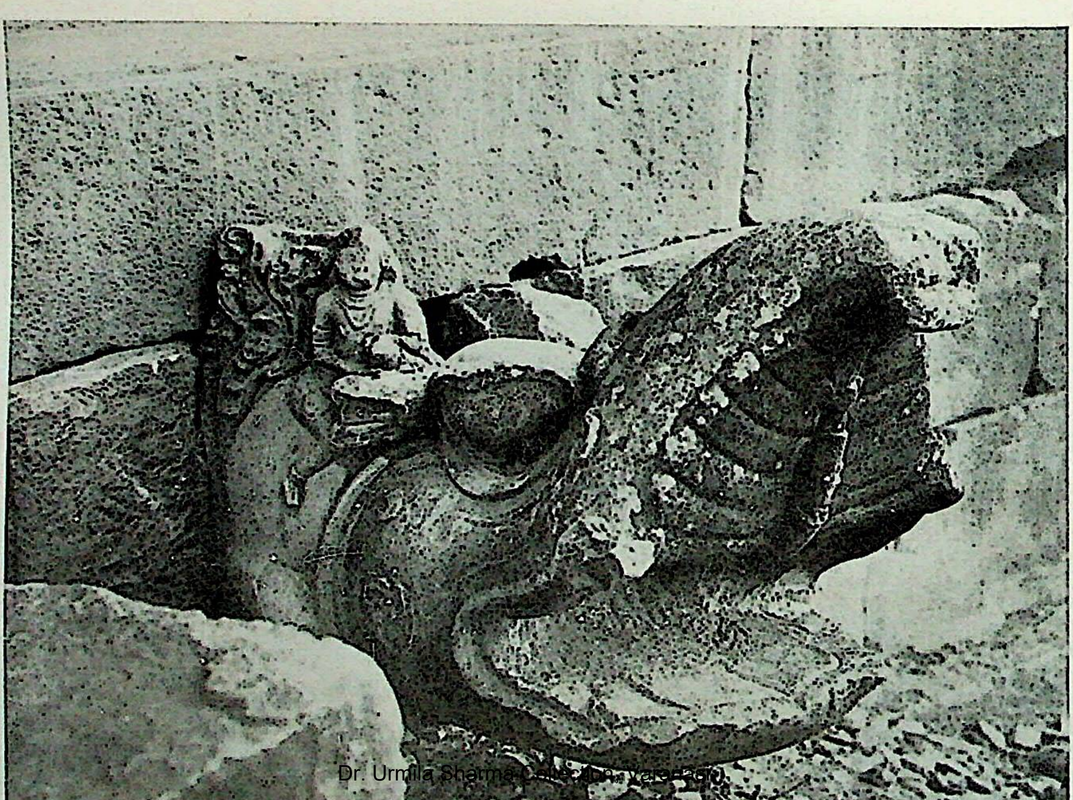
2. Candrāvatī (Rājasthān). *Makara-praṇāla* (loose piece). Maru-Gūrjara style (Caulukya-Paramāra), *c*. mid-late 11th cent. A.D. (Government Museum, Mt. Abu.)

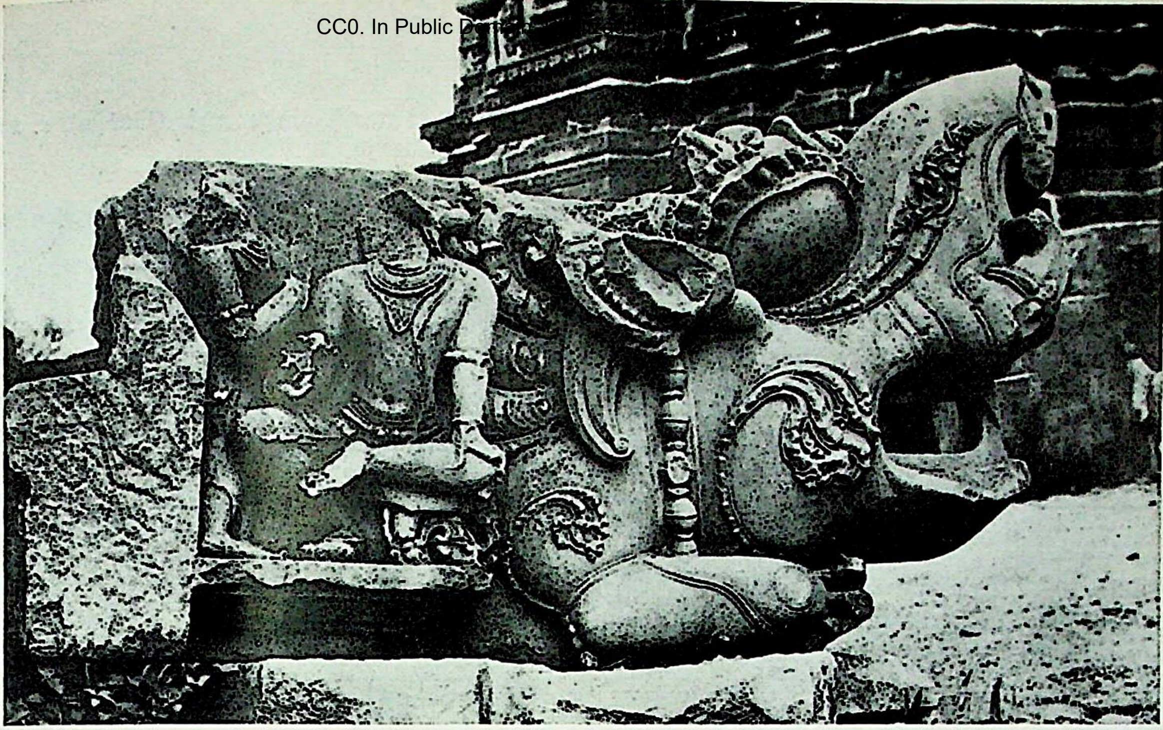




3. Sinnar (Mahārāṣṭra). Goṇḍeśvara temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Seüṇadeśa style (Seüṇa, or Yādava), *c.* early 13th cent. A.D. (Courtesy: Michael Meister.)

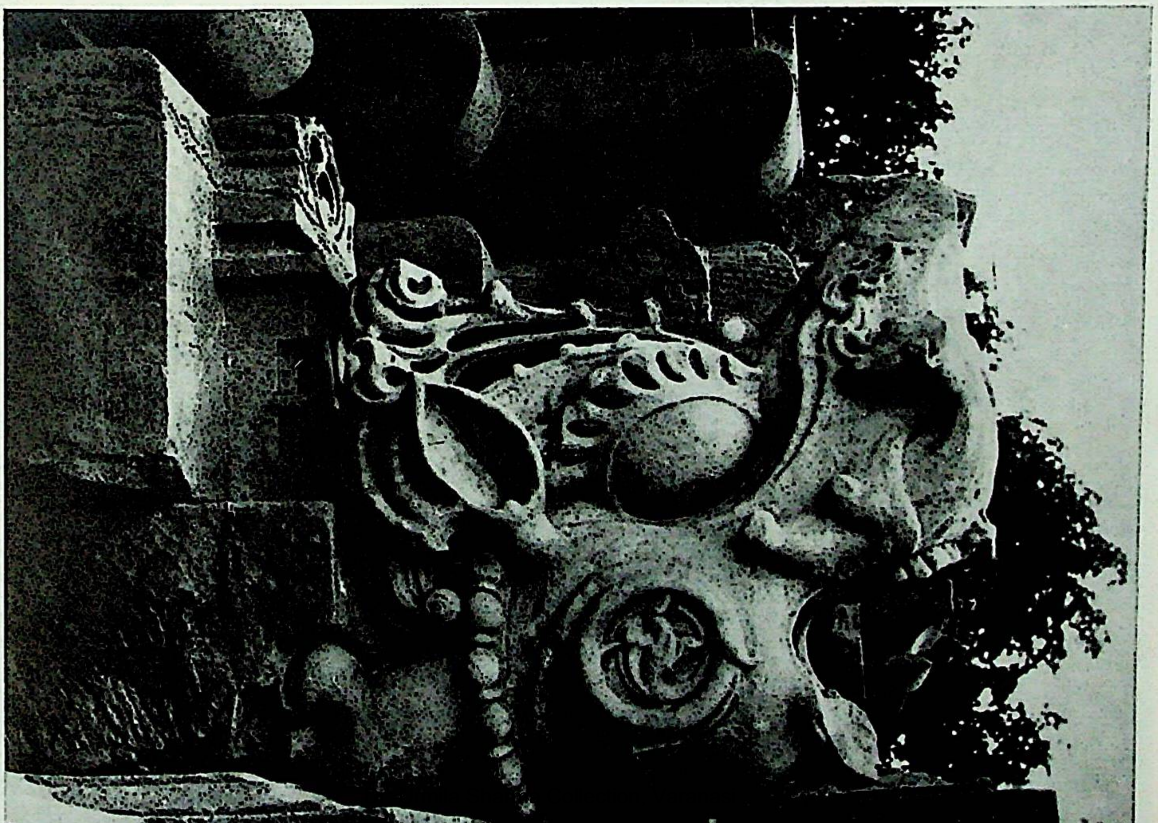
4. Bhojapur (Madhya Pradeśa), Bhojeśvara temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Mālava style (Paramāra), *c.* 2nd quarter of the 11th cent. A.D.



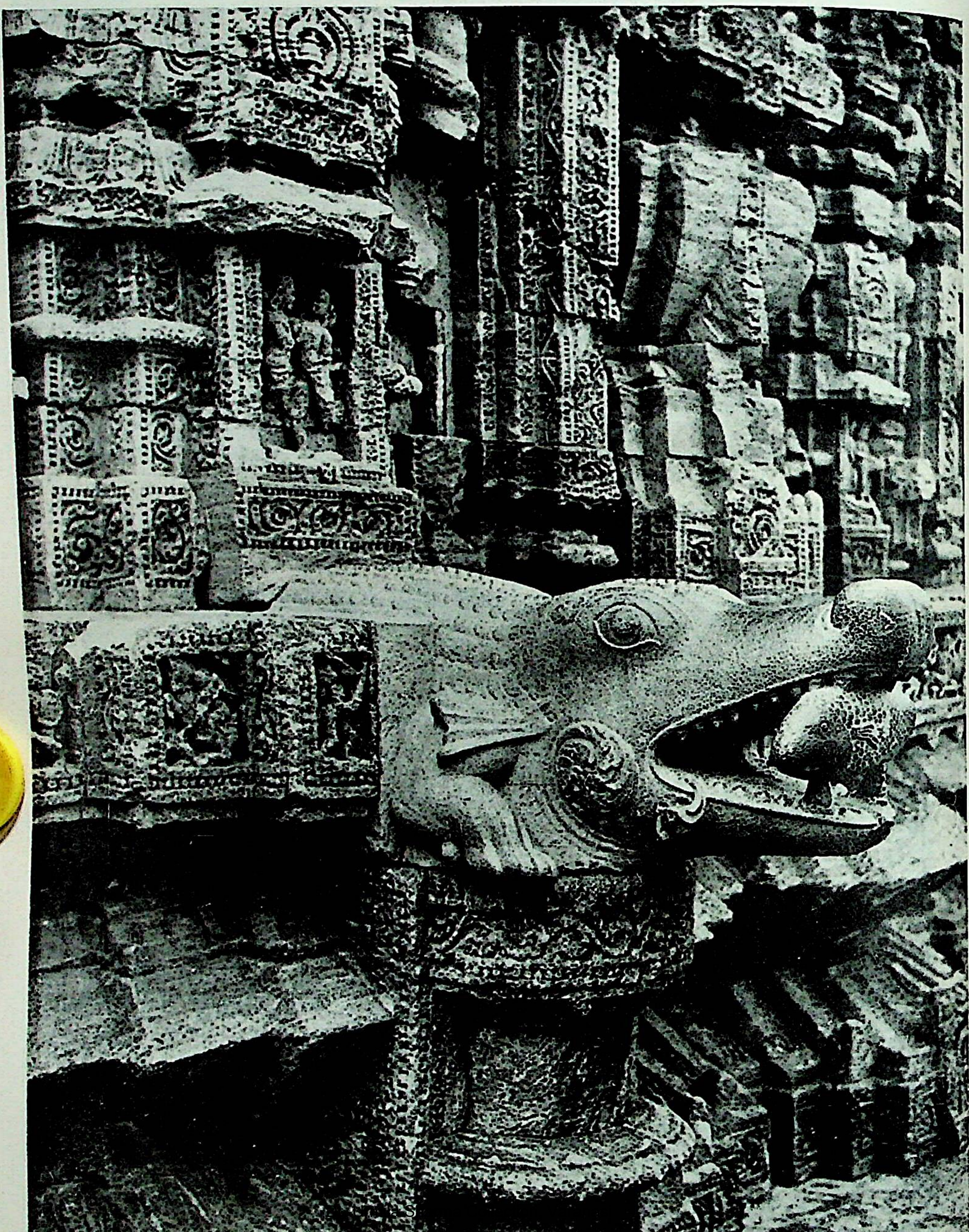


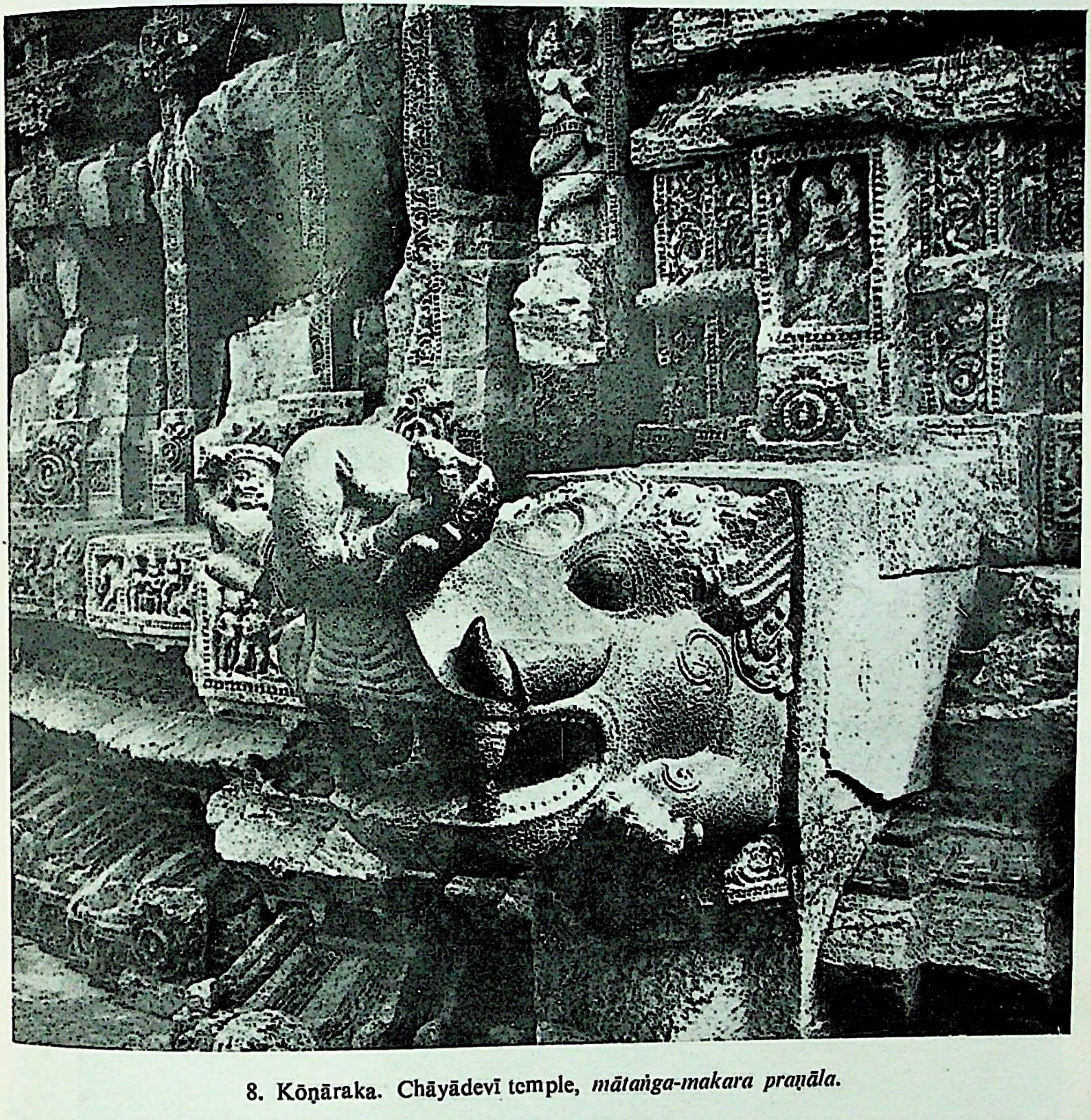
5. Khajurāho (Madhya Pradeśa). Jaina temple compound, *makara-praṇāla* (loose piece). Jejākabhukti style (Candella), *c.* 11th cent. A.D.

6. Khajurāho. Ādinātha temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Jejākabhukti style (Candella), *c.* 3rd quarter of the 11th cent. A.D.



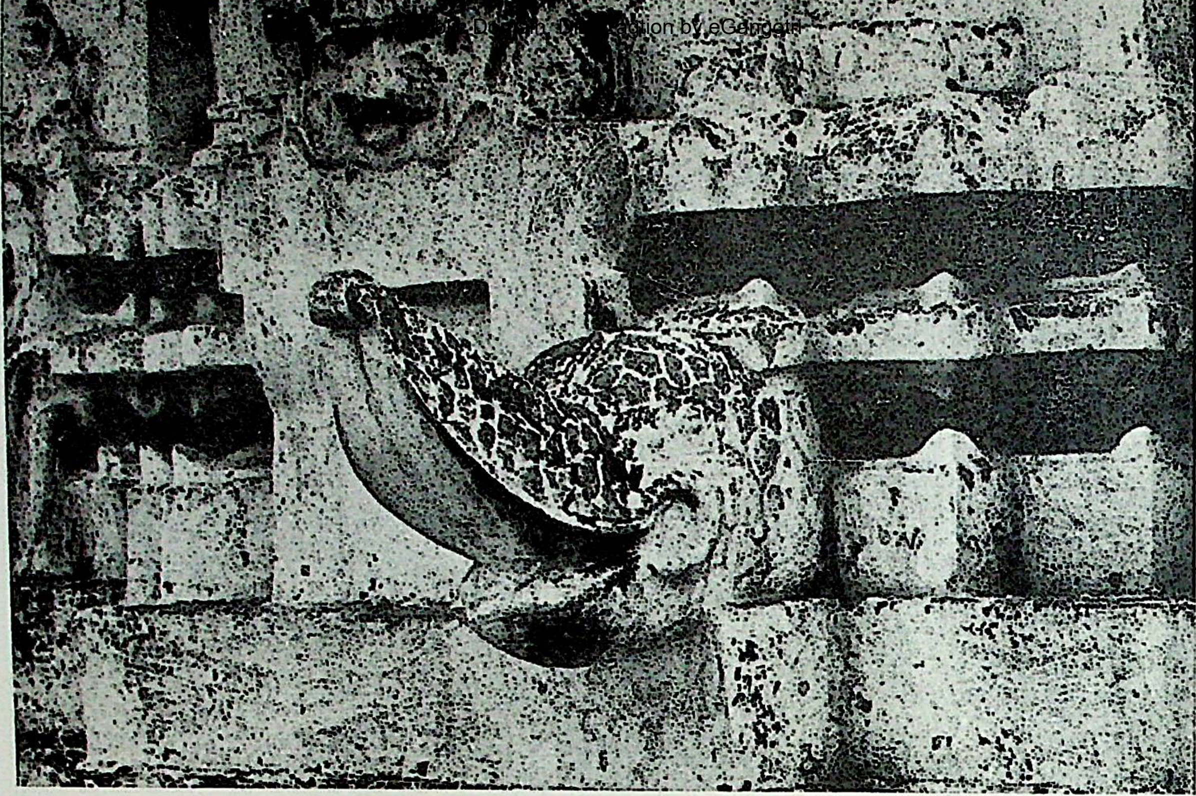
7. Kōṇaraka (Orissā), Temple of Chāyādevi, *nakra-praṇāla*. Later Kaliṅga style (Gaṅga), *c.* mid 13th cent A.D.





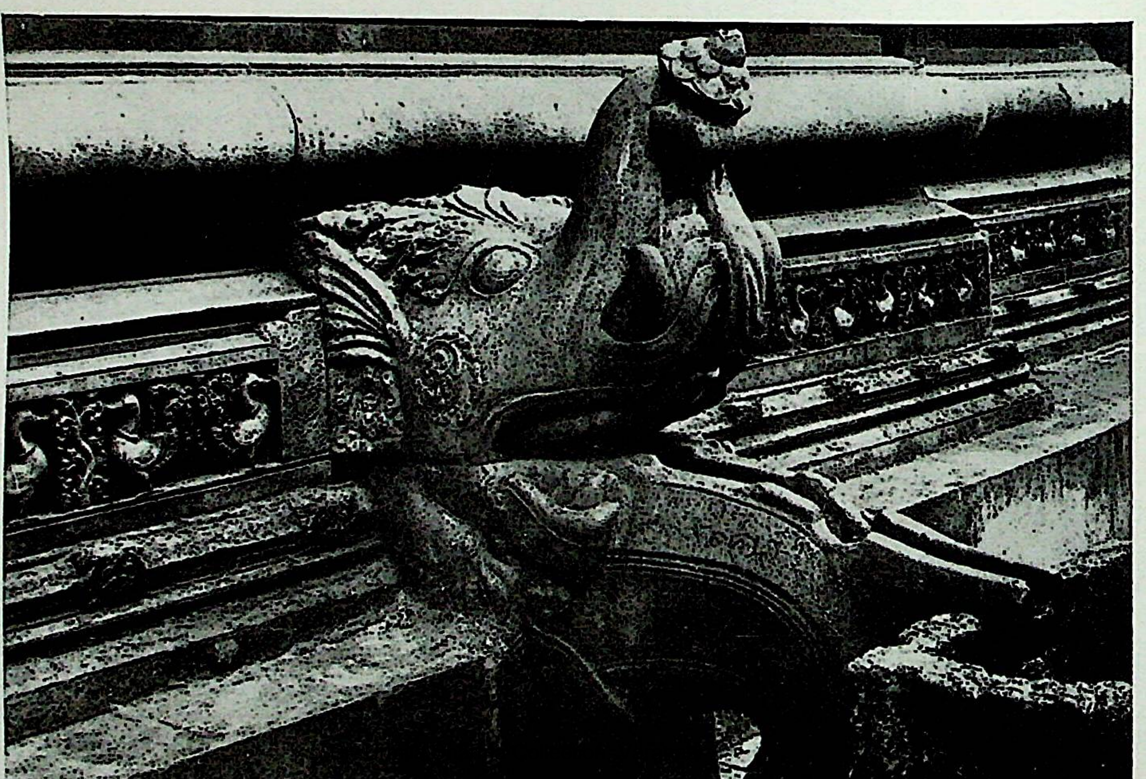
8. Kōṇāraka. Chāyādevī temple, *mātaṅga-makara praṇāla.*

Digitization by eGangotri

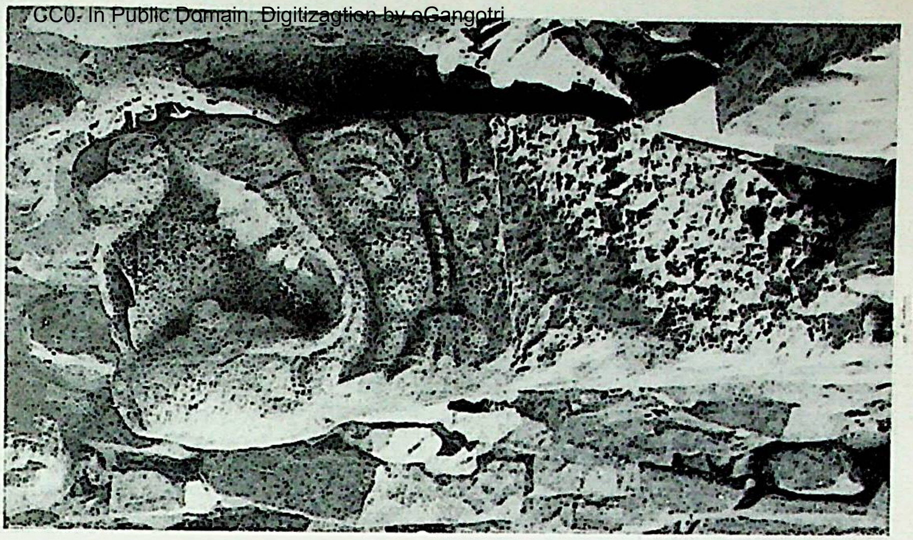


9. Bhīmavaram (Āndhra Pradeśa). Māṇḍavya-Nārāyaṇa temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Late Veṅgi style (Eastern Cālukya), *c*. 12th cent. A.D.

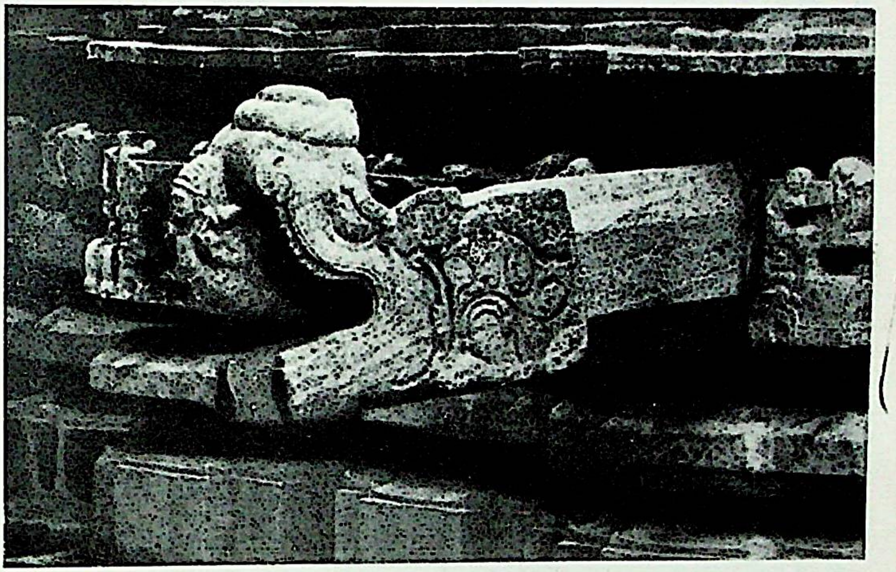
10. Siṁhācalam (Āndhra Pradeśa). Narasiṁha temple, *mātaṅga-makara praṇāla*. Āndhra-Kaliṅga style (Gaṅga), *c*. A. D. 1238-1268



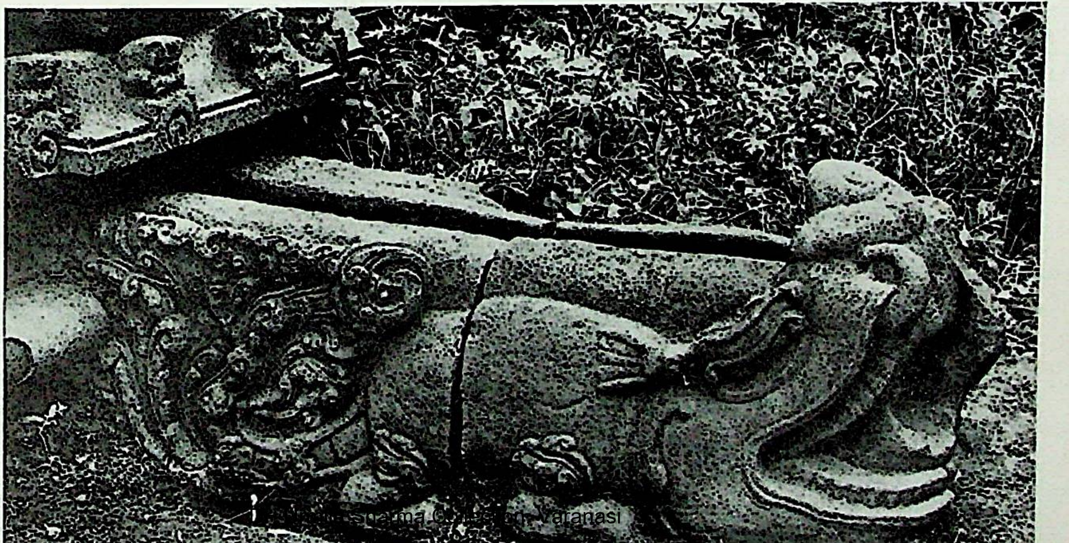
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri



11. Siddanakoḷḷa (Karṇāṭaka). Lakulīśa temple, *makara-praṇāla* (loose piece), Early Karṇāṭa (Calukya), *c.* A.D. 700.

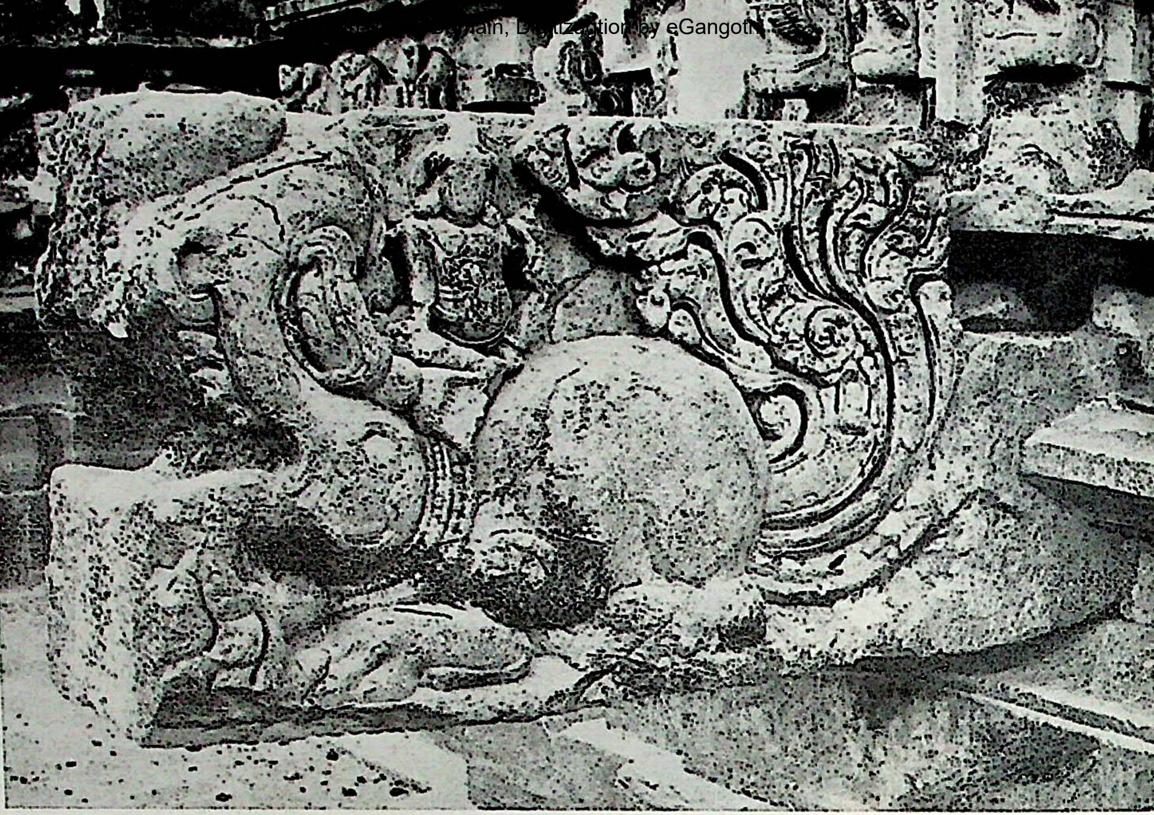


12. Āvani (Karṇāṭaka). Lakṣmaṇeśvara temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Noḷambavāḍi style (Noḷamba), *c.* A.D. 934.



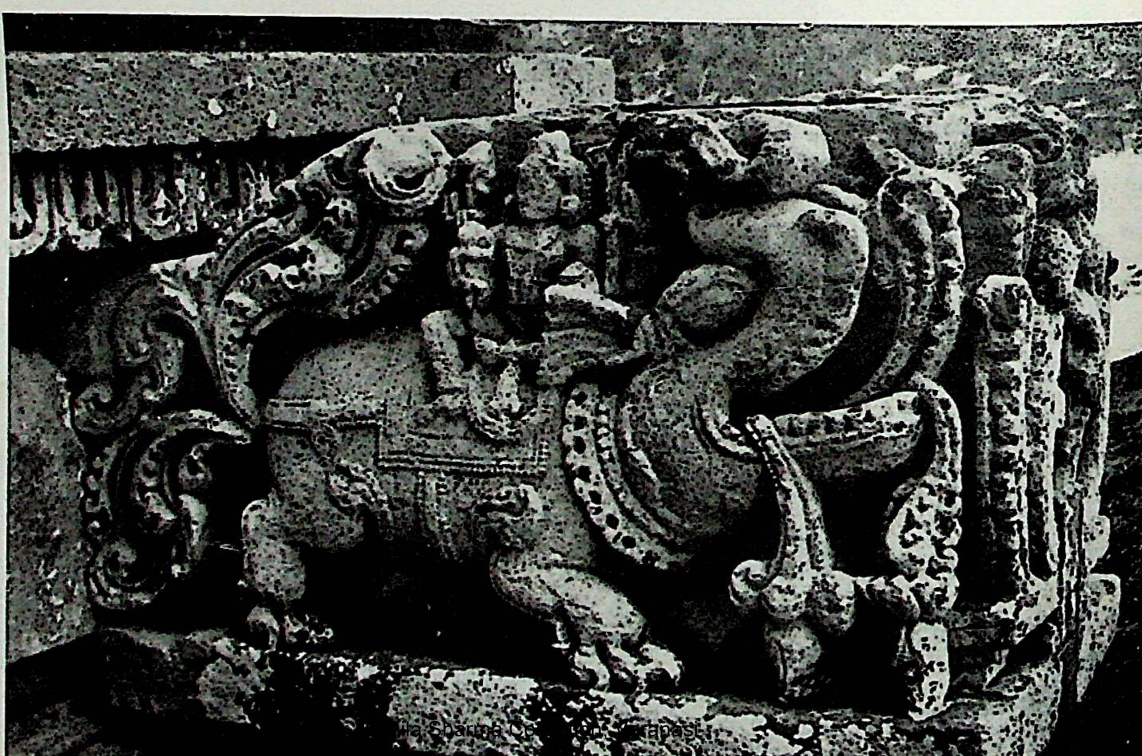
13. Sirval (Karṇāṭaka). Nandappā temple. *mātaṅga-makara-praṇāla*. Later Karṇāṭa style (Cālukya), *c.* Last quarter of the 10th cent. A.D.

Domain, Digitization by eGangotri



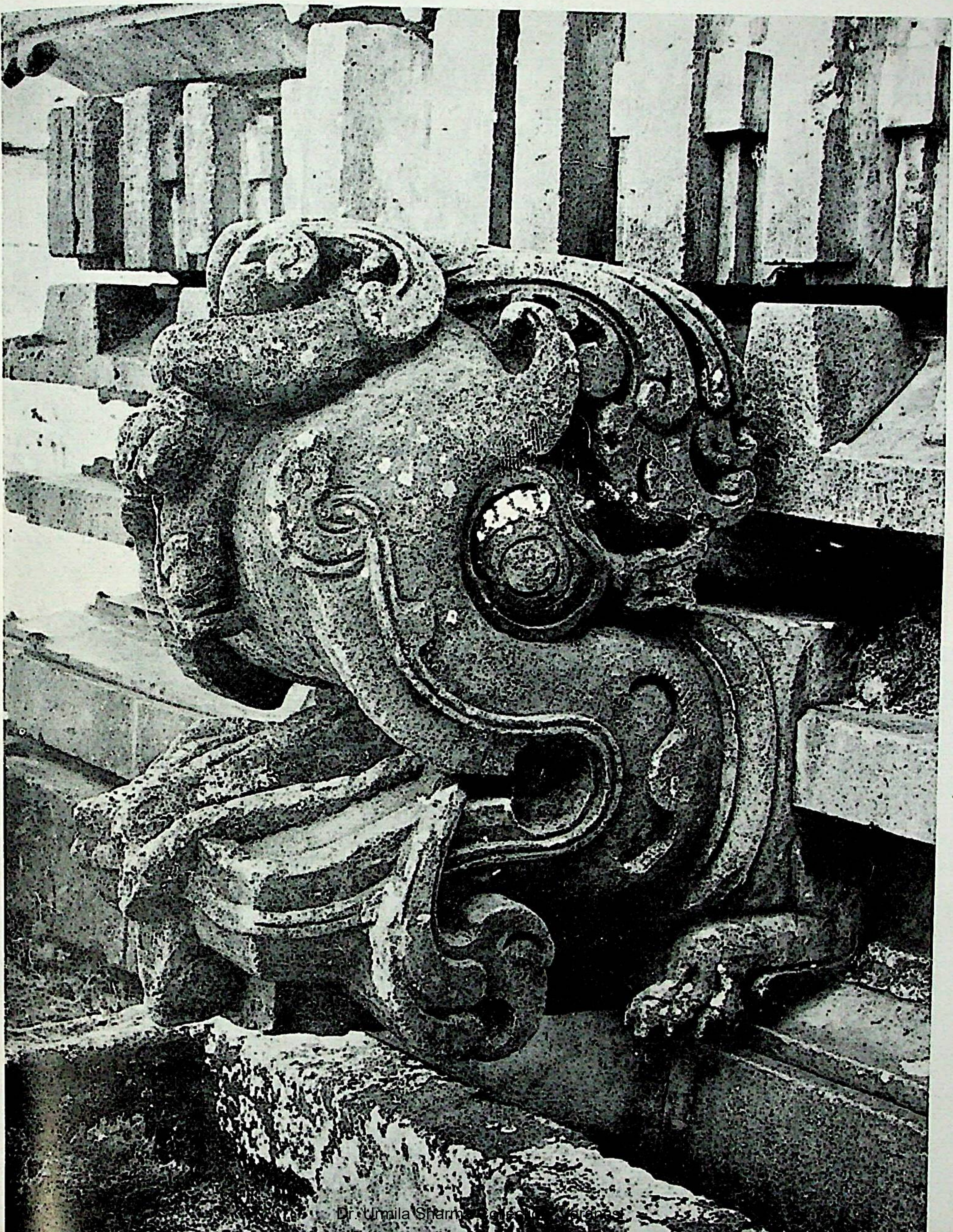
14. Lakkuṇḍi (Karṇāṭaka). Jaina temple, *makara-praṇāla* Later Karṇāṭa style (Cālukya). A.D. 1008.

15. Maraḷe (Karṇāṭaka). Canna-Keśava temple, *makara-praṇāla*, Later Karṇāṭa stylc (Hoysaḷa), A.D. 1130.

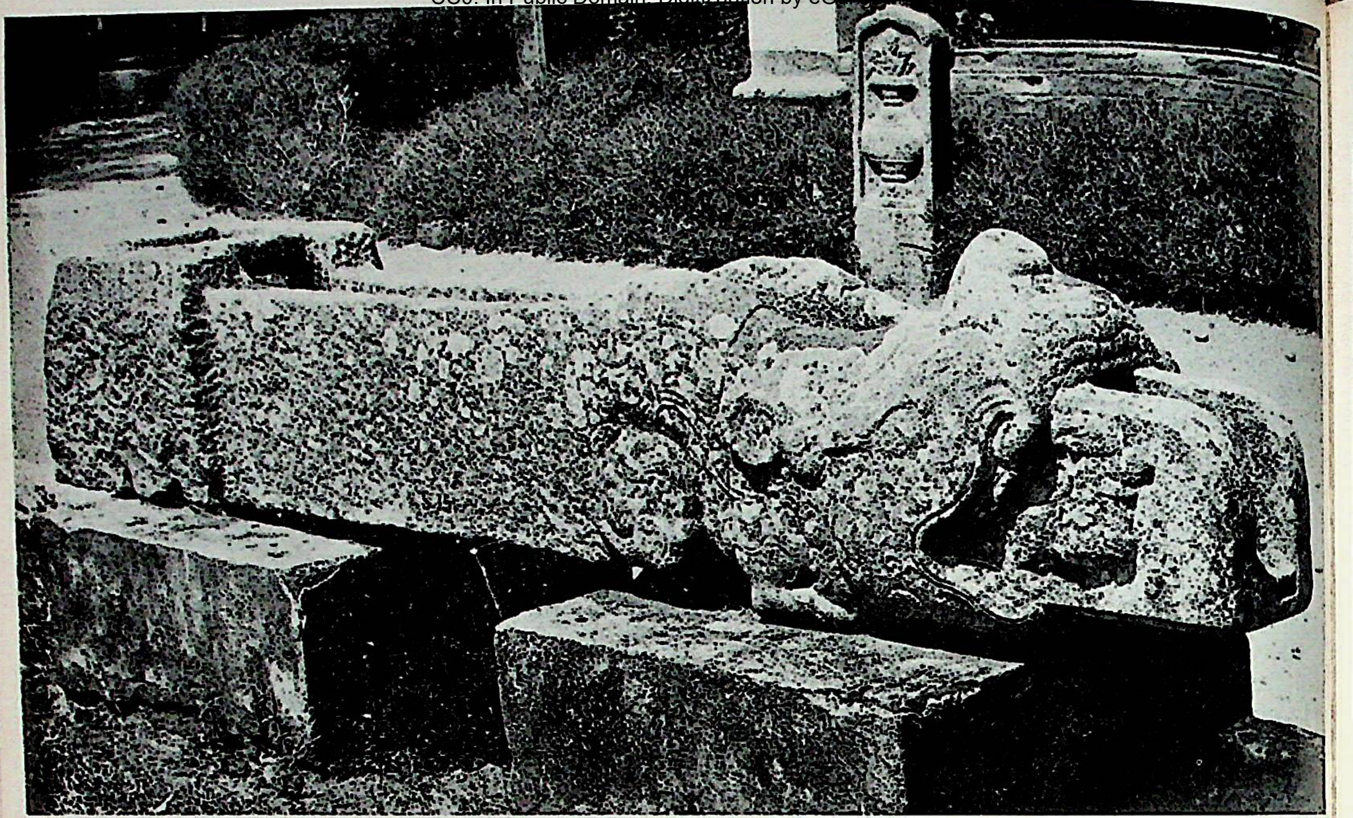


la Sharma Co Varanasi

16. Doddagaḍḍavalli (Karṇāṭaka). Lakṣmīdevī temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Later Karṇāṭa style (Hoysaḷa), A.D. 1112

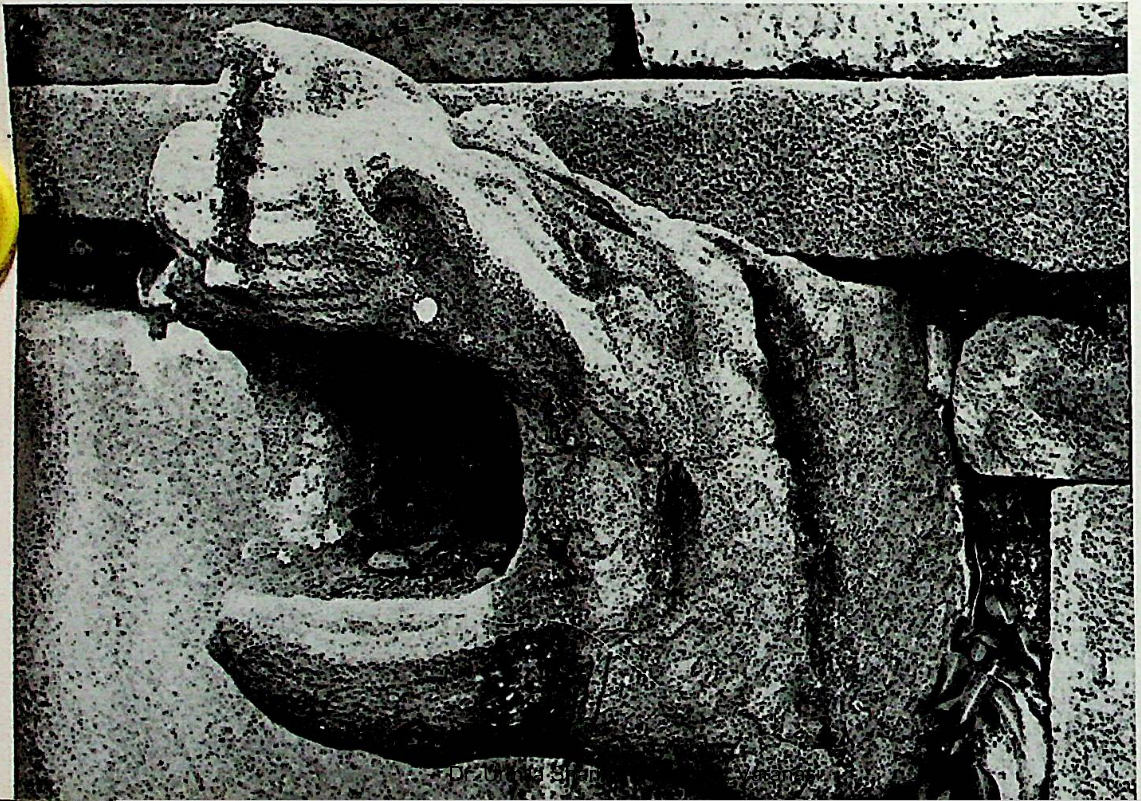


CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

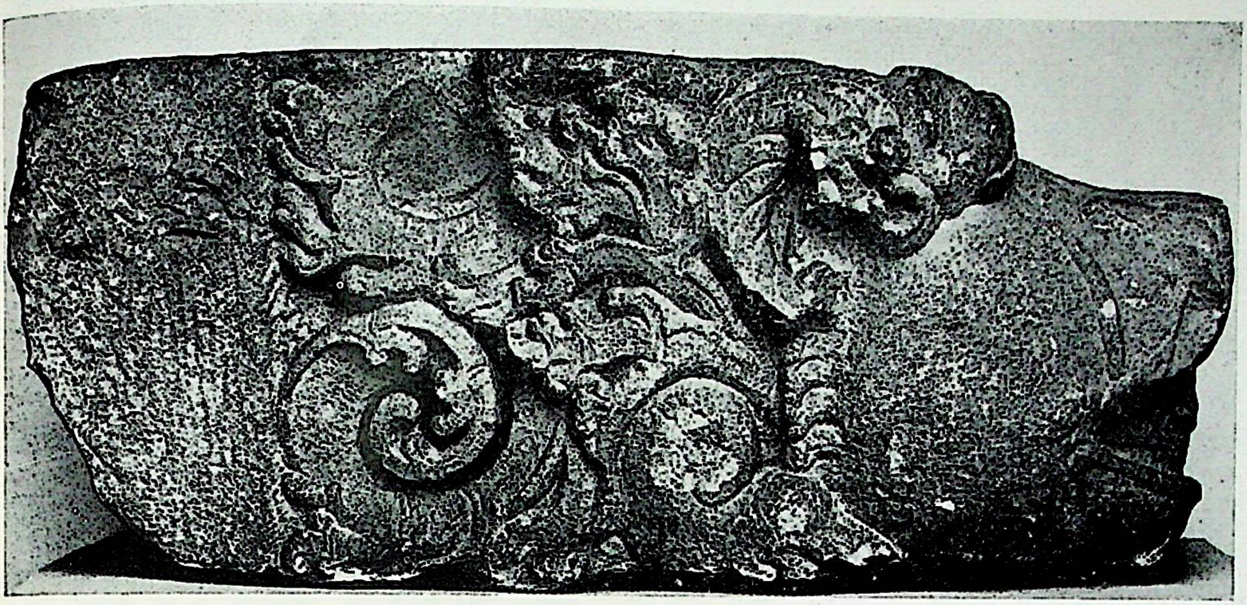


17. Anurādhāpura (Śri Laṅkā). *Makara-praṇāla* (loose piece). c. 8th cent. A.D. (Government Museum, Anurādhāpura.)

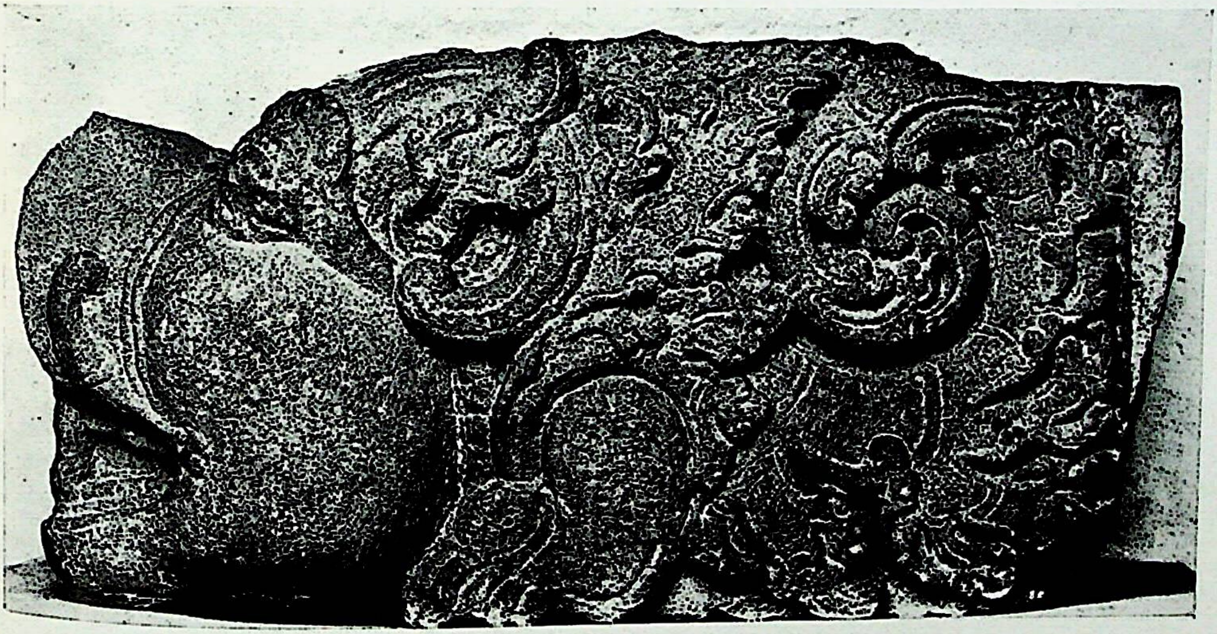
18. Anurādhāpura. Isurumuni vihāra, *jagatī, makara-praṇāla. C.* 8th cent. A.D.



Dr. Urmila Sharm [illegible] Varanasi

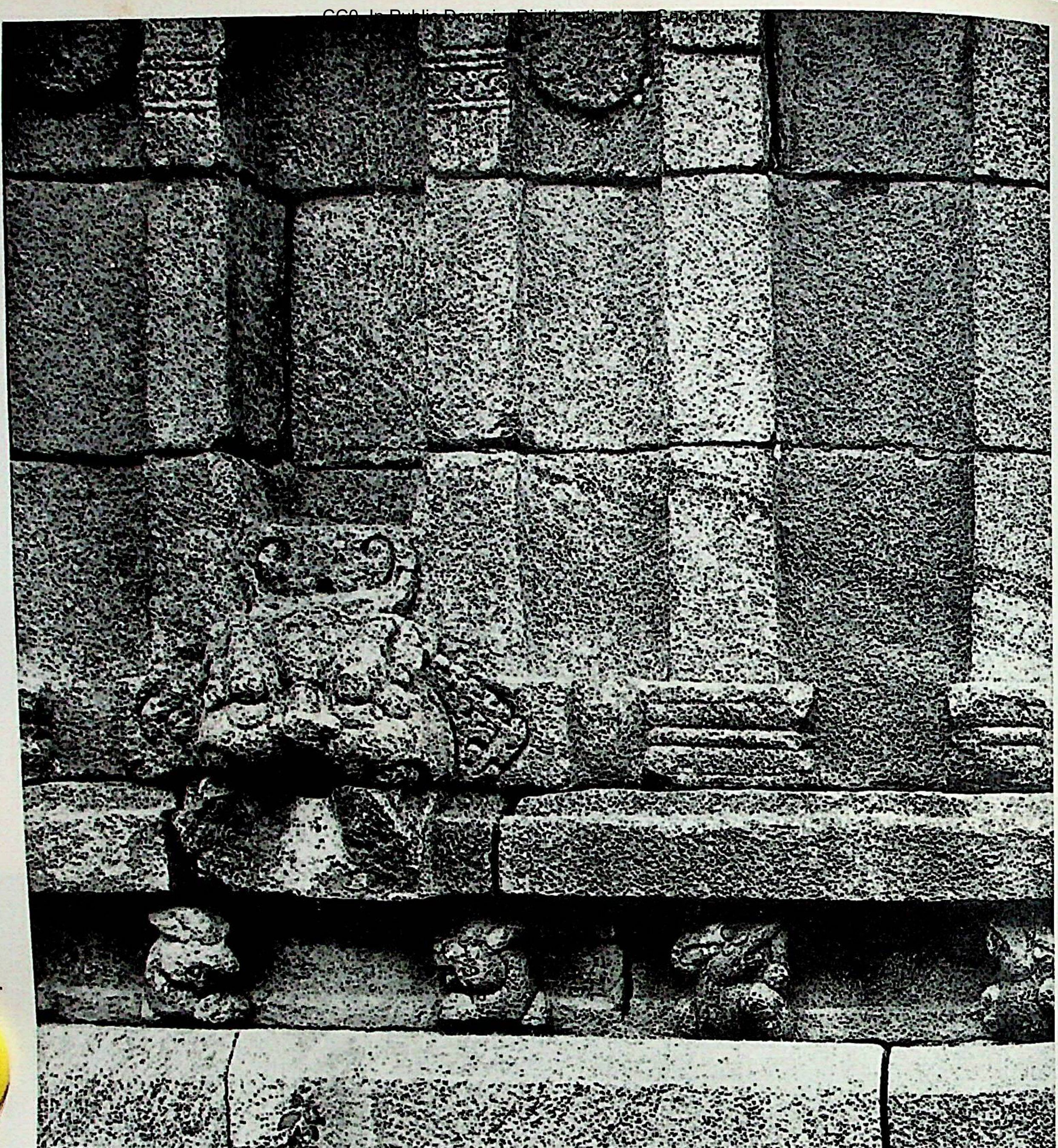


19. Sārnāth, Vārāṇasī (Uttar Pradeśa). *Makara-praṇāla* (loose piece). Late Gupta, *c.* 5th-6th cent. A.D. (Sarnath Musem).



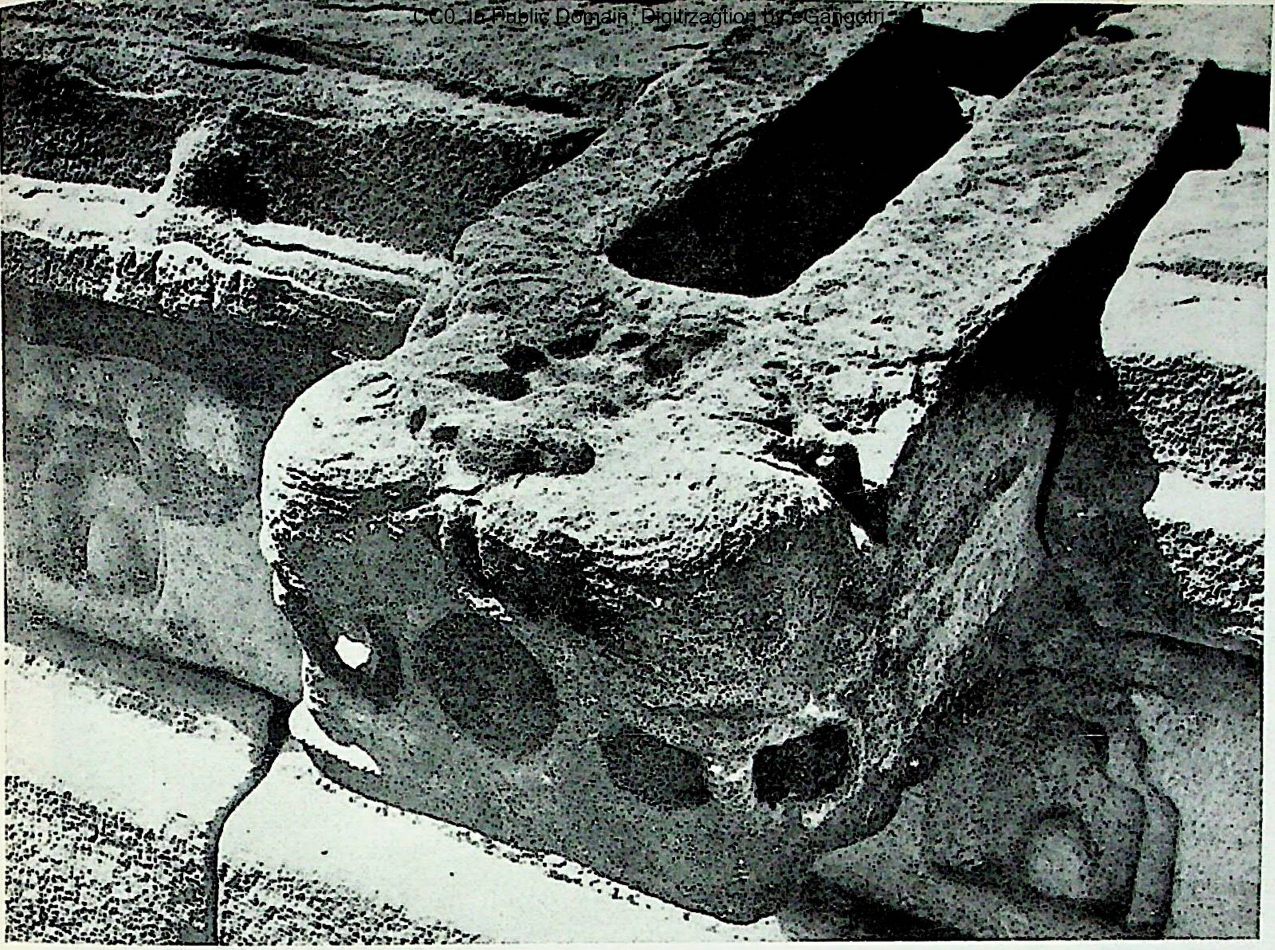
20. Sārnāth. *Makara-praṇāla* (loose piece). *c.* 5th-6th cent. A.D. (Sarnath Museum.)

CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri



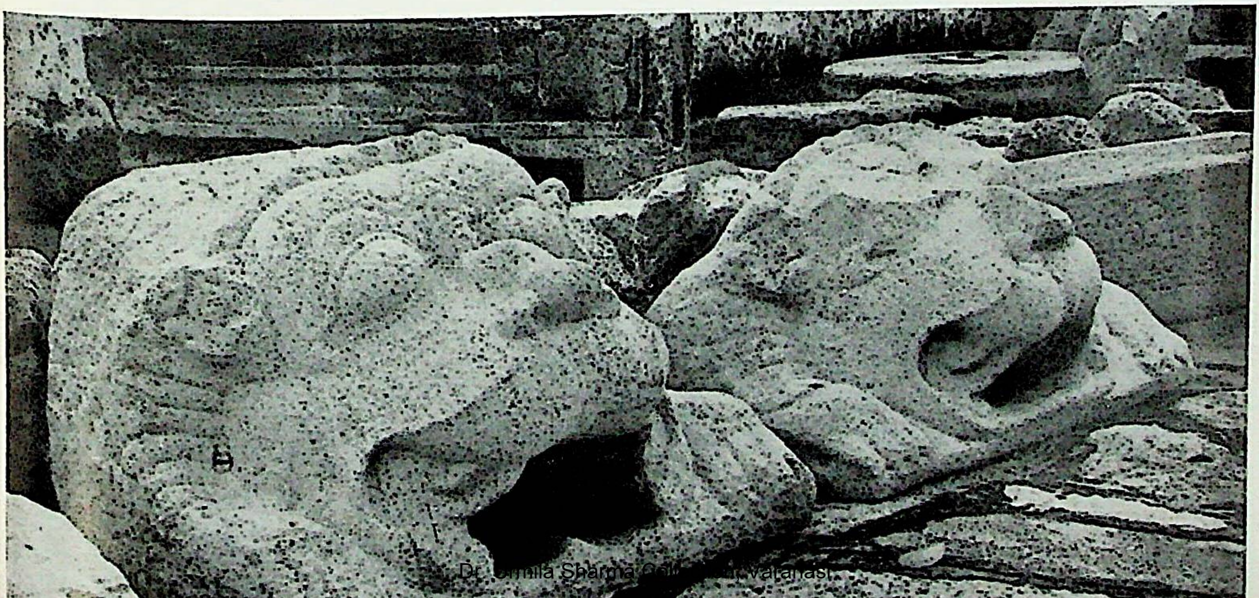
22. Maṇṇe (Karṇāṭaka). Akka-Taṅgai temple, *grāsa-praṇāla*. Early Karṇāṭa style (Rāṣṭrakūṭa), *c.* early 10th cent. A.D.

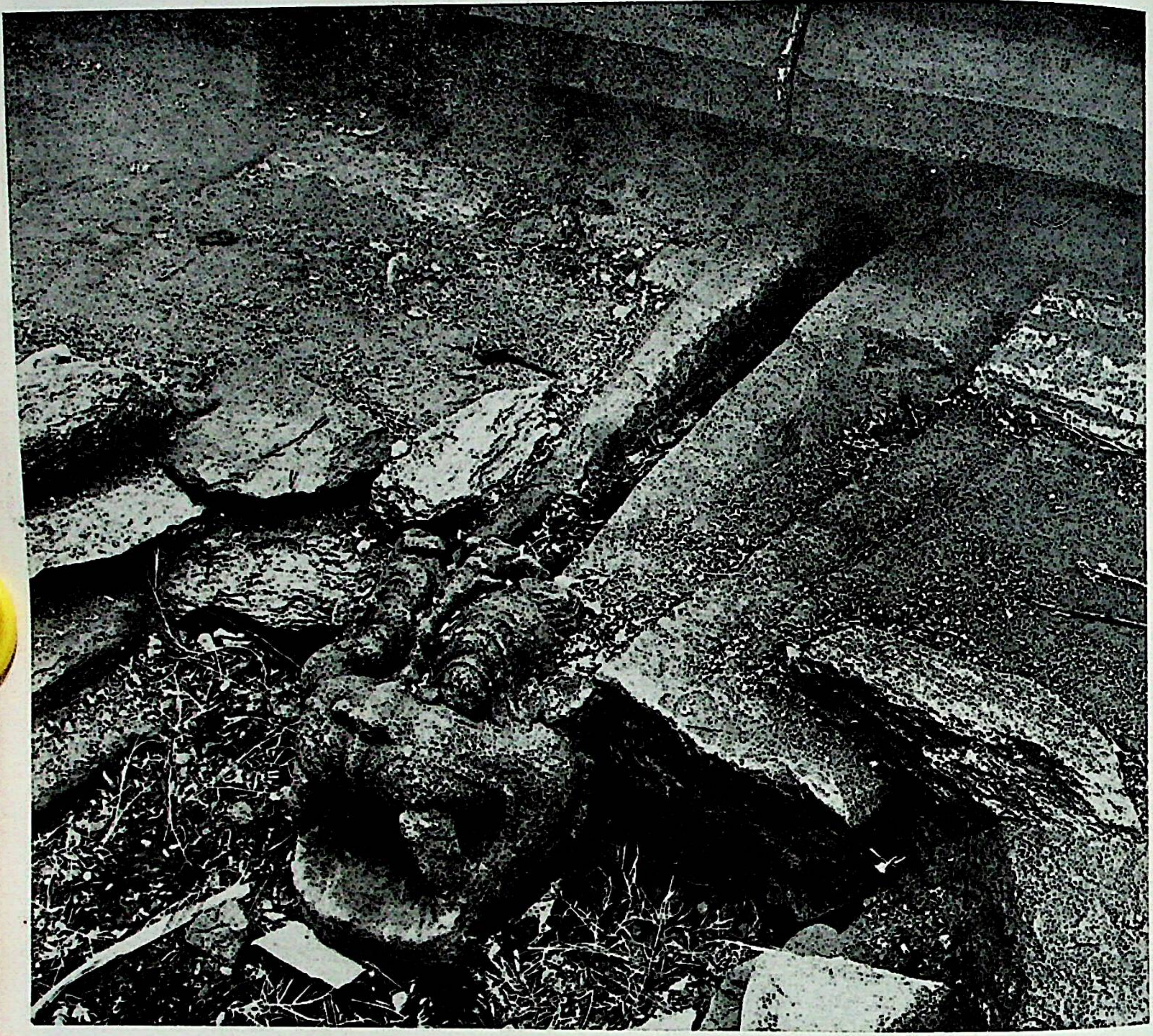
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri



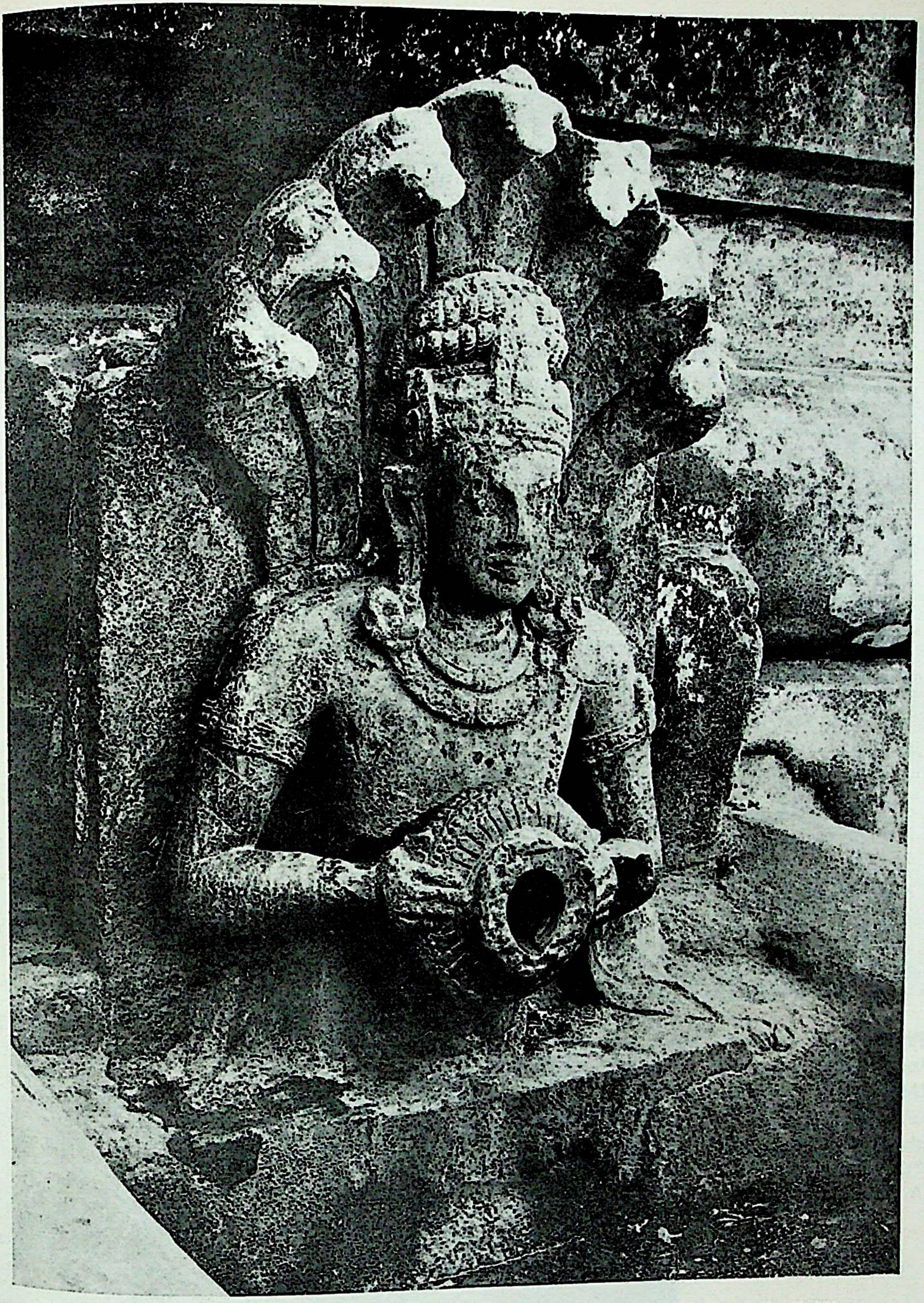
21. Paṭṭadakala (Karṇāṭaka). Galaganātha temple, *jagatī*, *grāsa-praṇāla*. Karṇāṭa-Nāgara style: Ālampur school (Early Calukya), *c.* early 8th cent. A.D.

24. Anurādhāpura (Śrī Laṅkā). Thupārāma stūpa, *siṁhamukha-praṇālas* (loose), *c.* 2nd-3rd cent. A.D. or later.

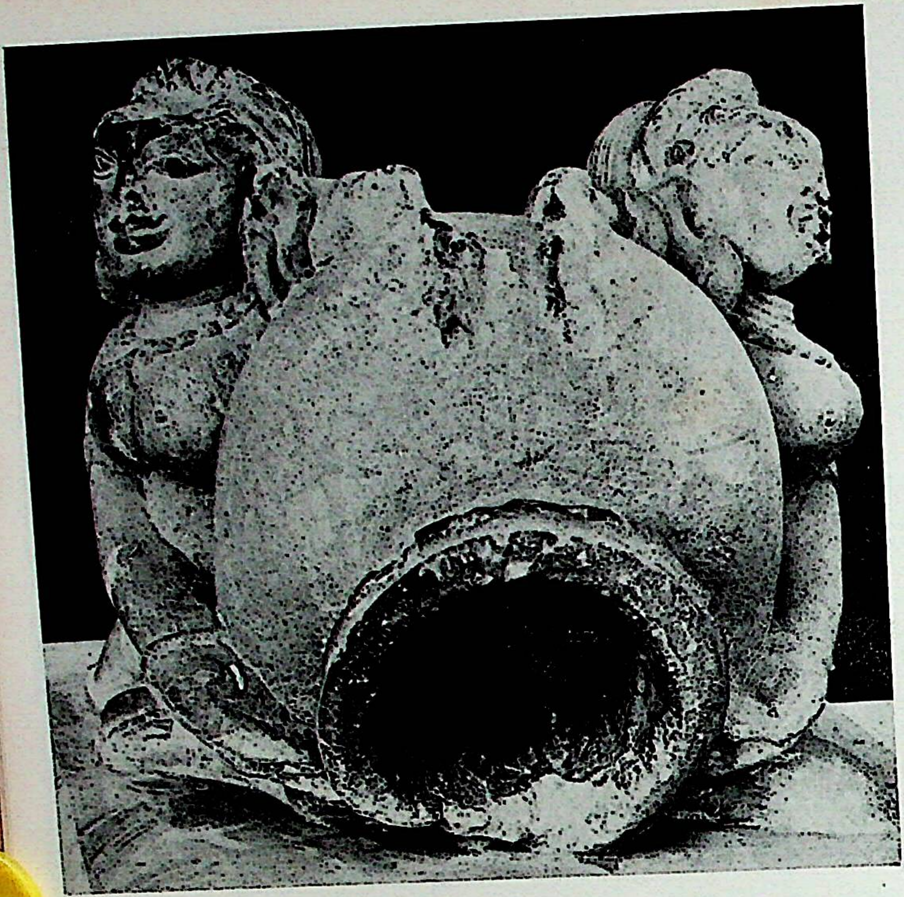




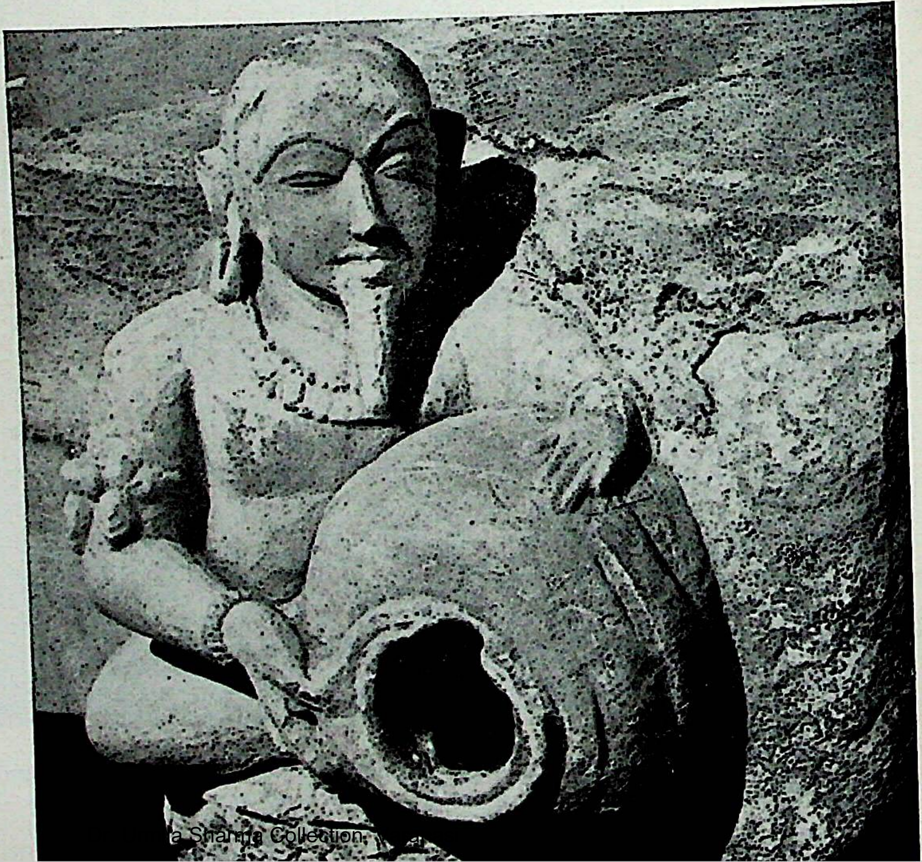
23. Bāgli (Karṇāṭaka). Kalleśvara temple. *grāsa-praṇāla*. Late Karṇāṭa style (Cālukya), *c.* early 10th cent. A.D.



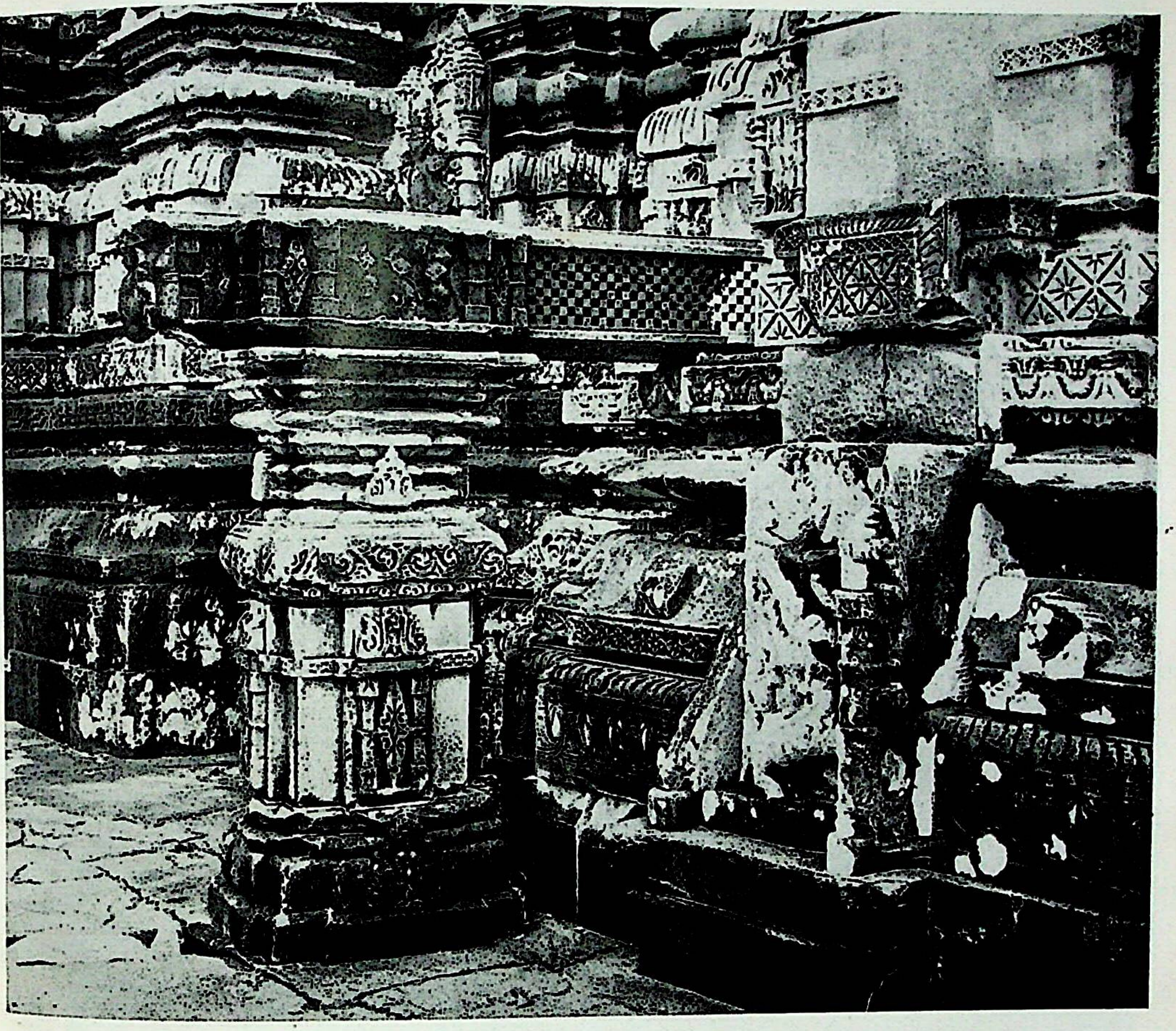
25. Mukhaliṅgam (Āndhra Pradeśa). Madhukeśvara temple, *ghaṭa-praṇāla*. Early Kaliṅga (Bhauma-Kara), *c.* last quarter of the 8th cent A.D.



26. Ābāneri (Rājasthān). Harṣat mātā temple, *jagatī*, *ghaṭa-praṇāla*. Sapādalakṣa style (Early Cāhamāṇa ?), *c.* late 8th cent. A.D. (Amber Museum.)

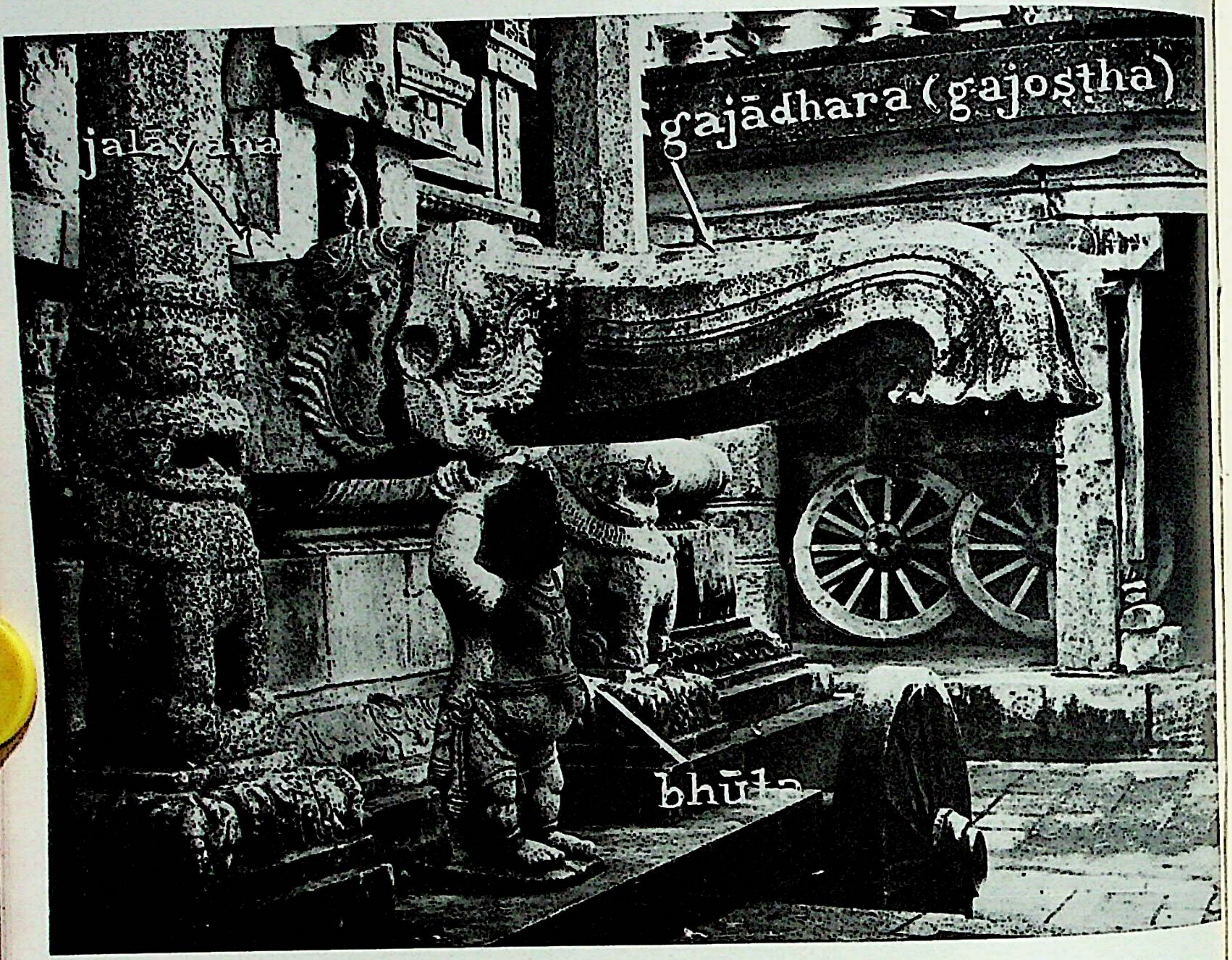


27. Provenance unknown. Indore Site Museum (Madhya Pradeśa). *Ghaṭa-praṇāla*. Mālava style (Paramāra-Guhila ?), *c.* late 11th cent. A.D.

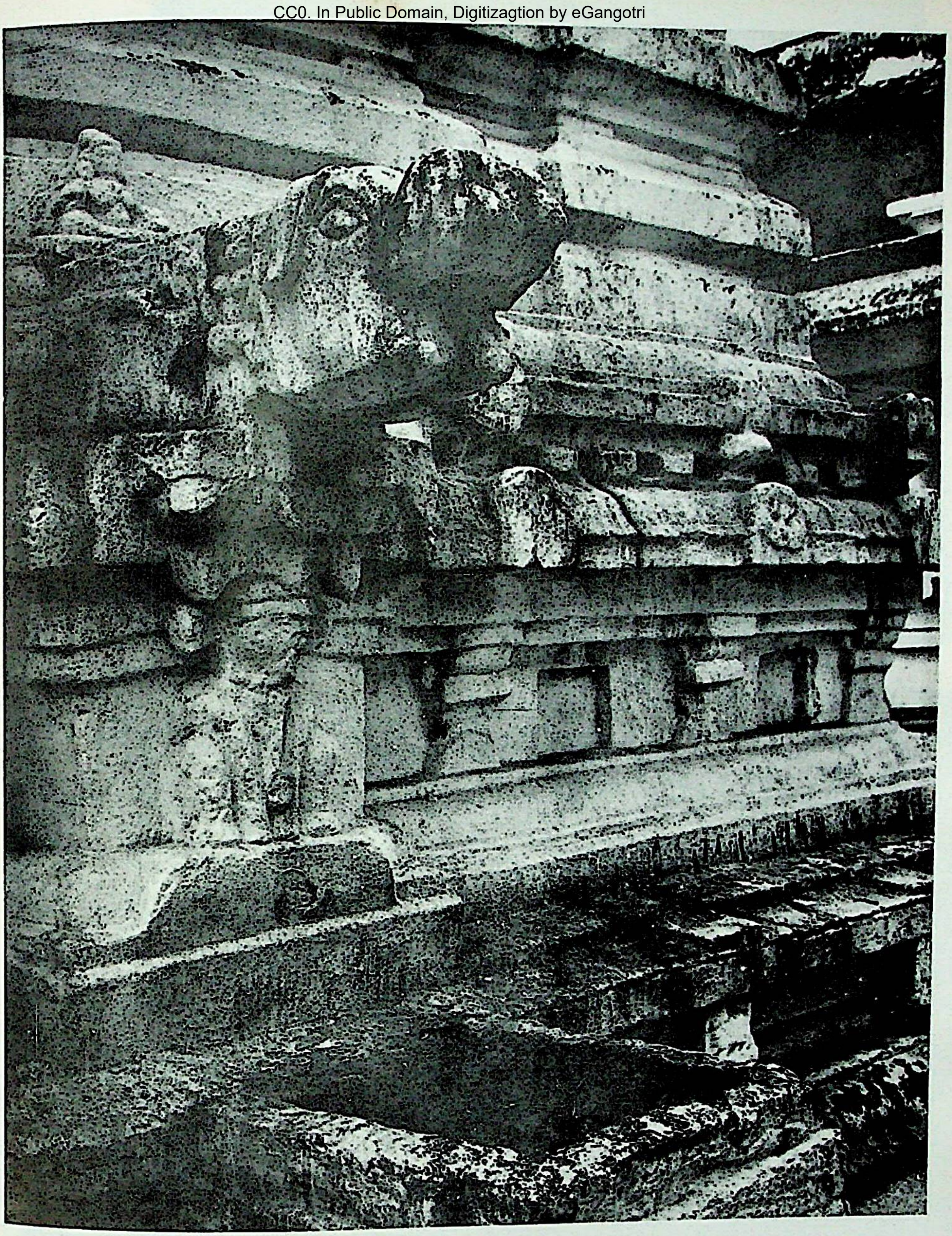


28. Udayapur (Madhya Pradeśa). Udayayeśvara temple, *praṇāla*. Mālava style (Paramāra), *c.* A.D. 1080

CC0. In Public Domain, Digitizaction by eGangotri

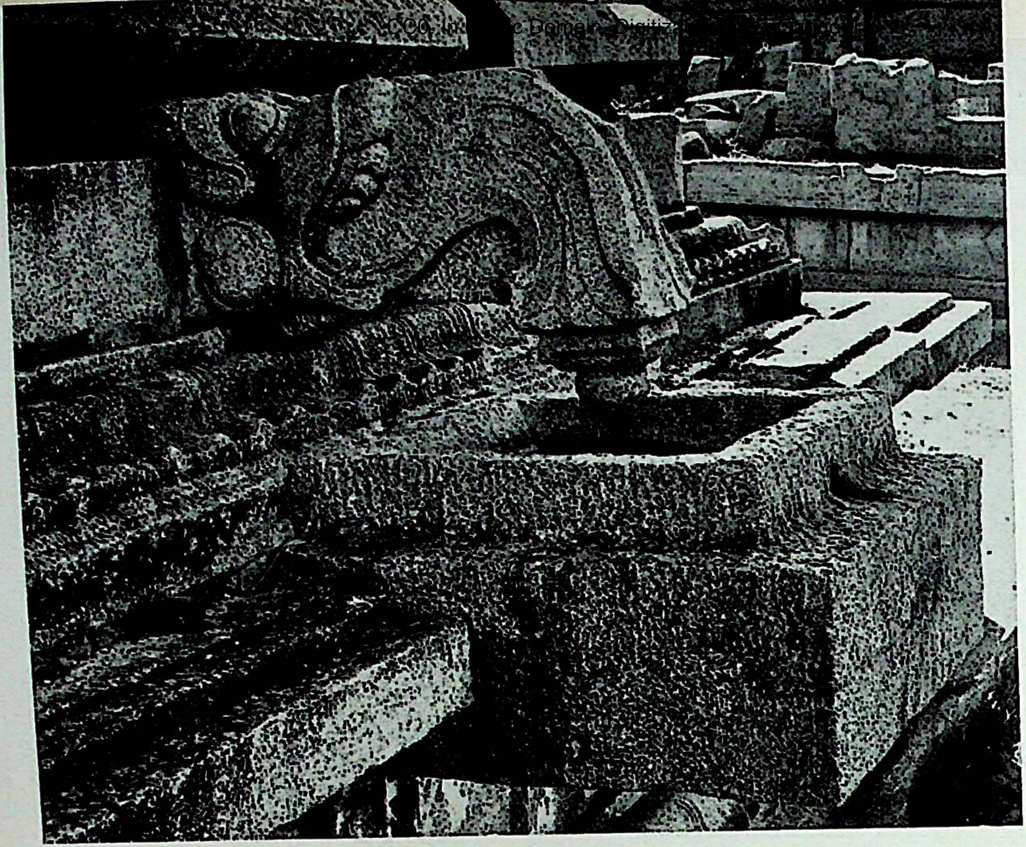

jalāyana
gajādhara (gajoṣṭha)
bhūta

29. Melakaḍumbur (Tamiḻnāḍu). Amṛtaghaṭeśvara temple *siṁha-nāla*. Cōḻanāḍu style (Cōḻa, Late Phase). *c.* A.D. 1110-1113.



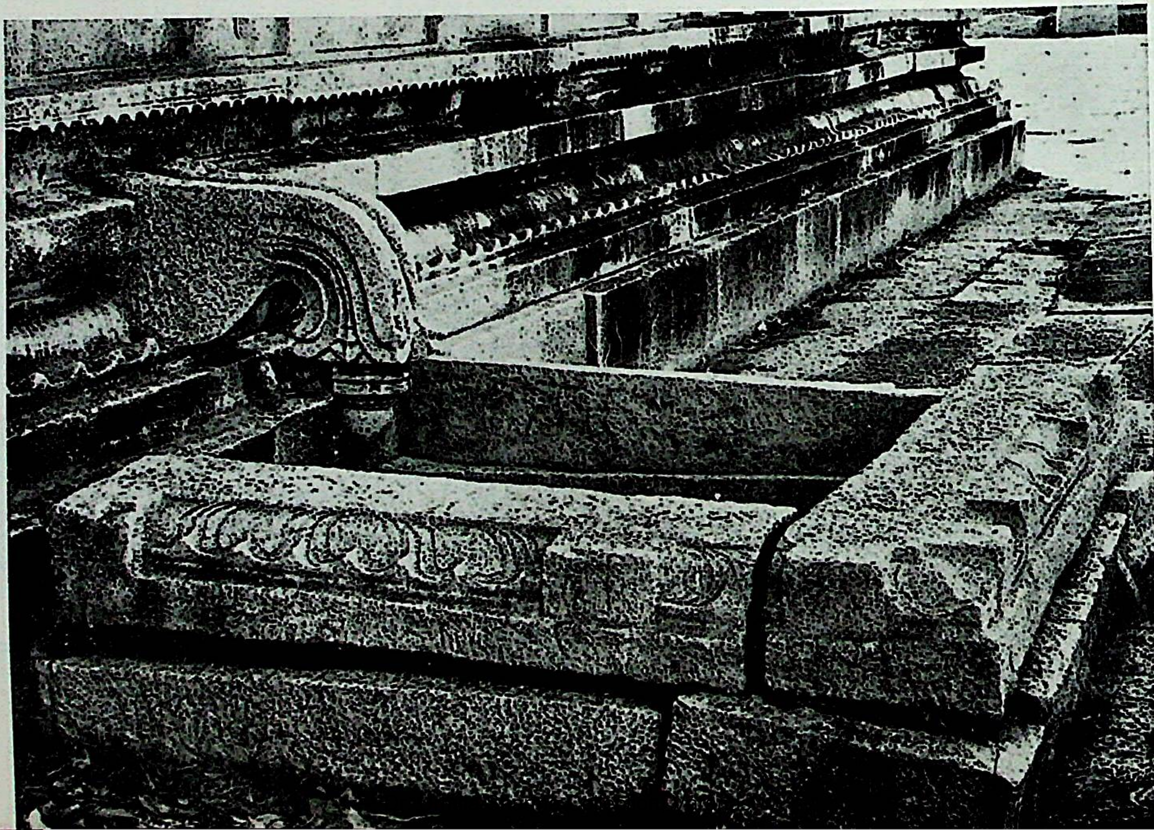
30. Sarpavaram (Āndhra Pradeśa). Bhāvanārāyaṇa temple, *makara-praṇāla*. Later Āndhra style (Eastern Cālukya), *c.* 12th cent. A.D.

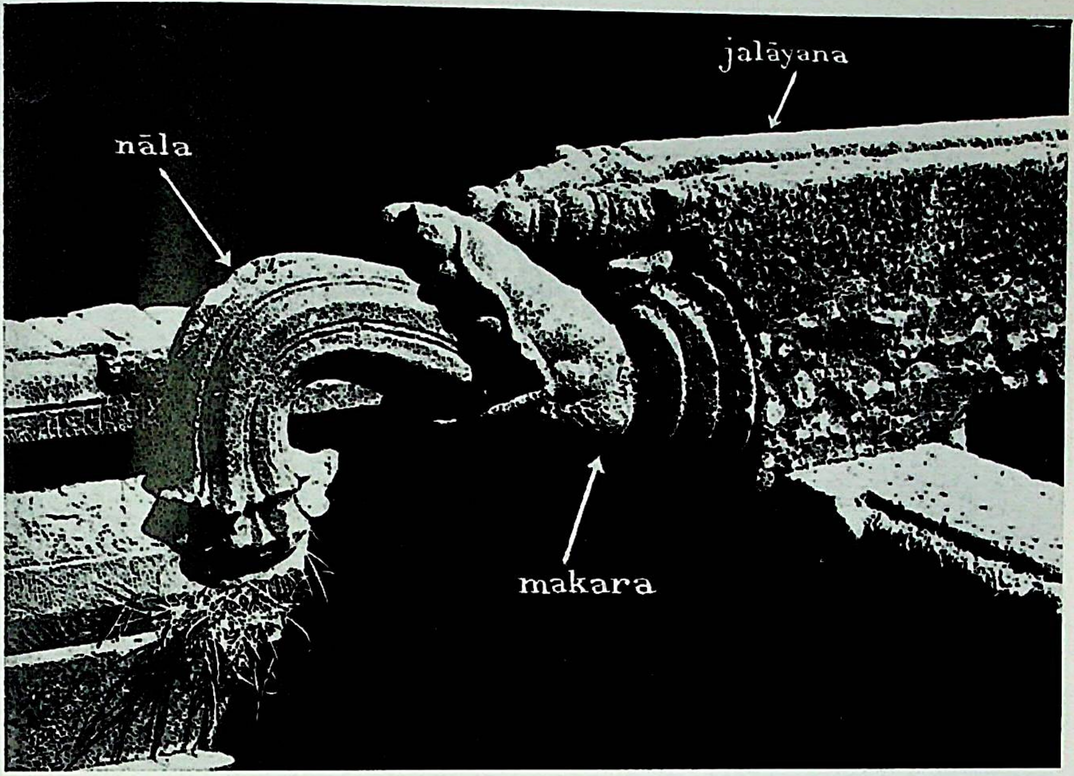
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitized by eGangotri



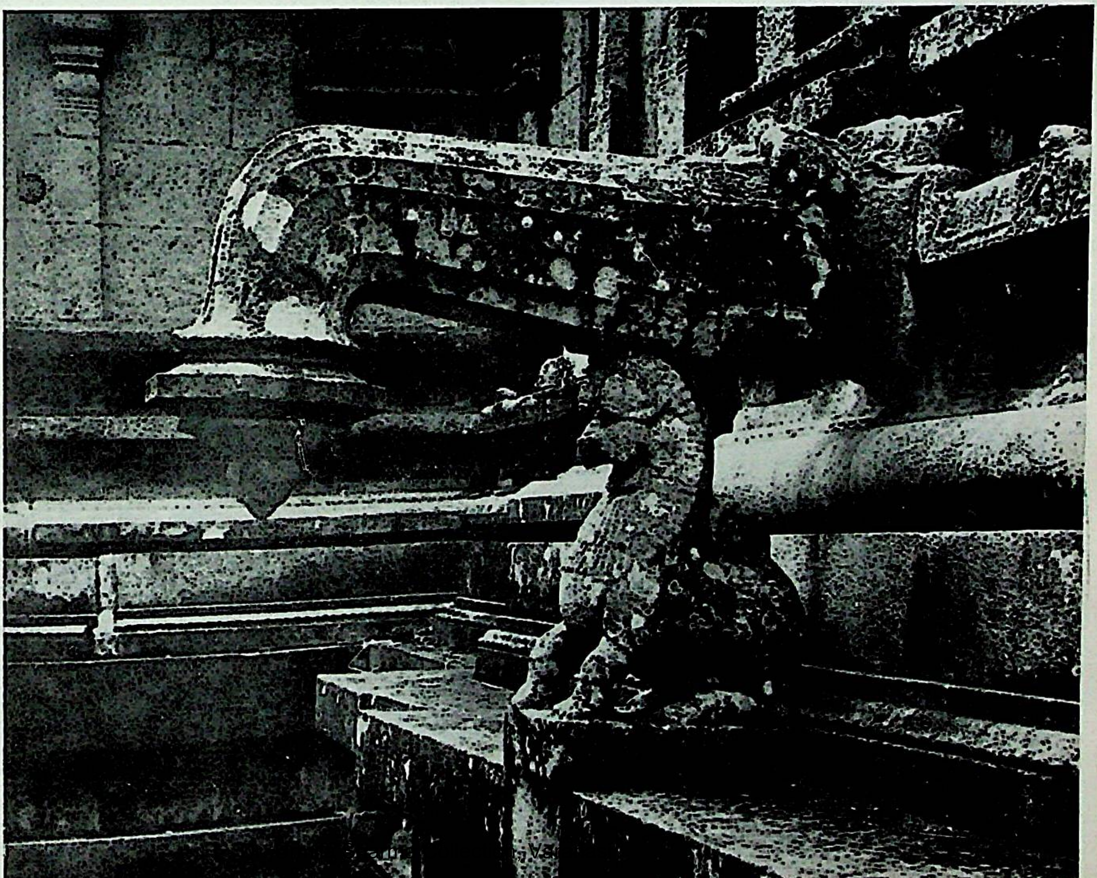
31. Hampi (Karṇāṭaka). Viṭṭhalarāya temple complex, Ammaṇ shrine, *nāla*. Vijayanagar style, *c*. 16th cent. A.D.

32. Hampi. Vitthalarāya temple, *nāla*. Vijayanagar style, *c*. first half of 16th cent. A.D.

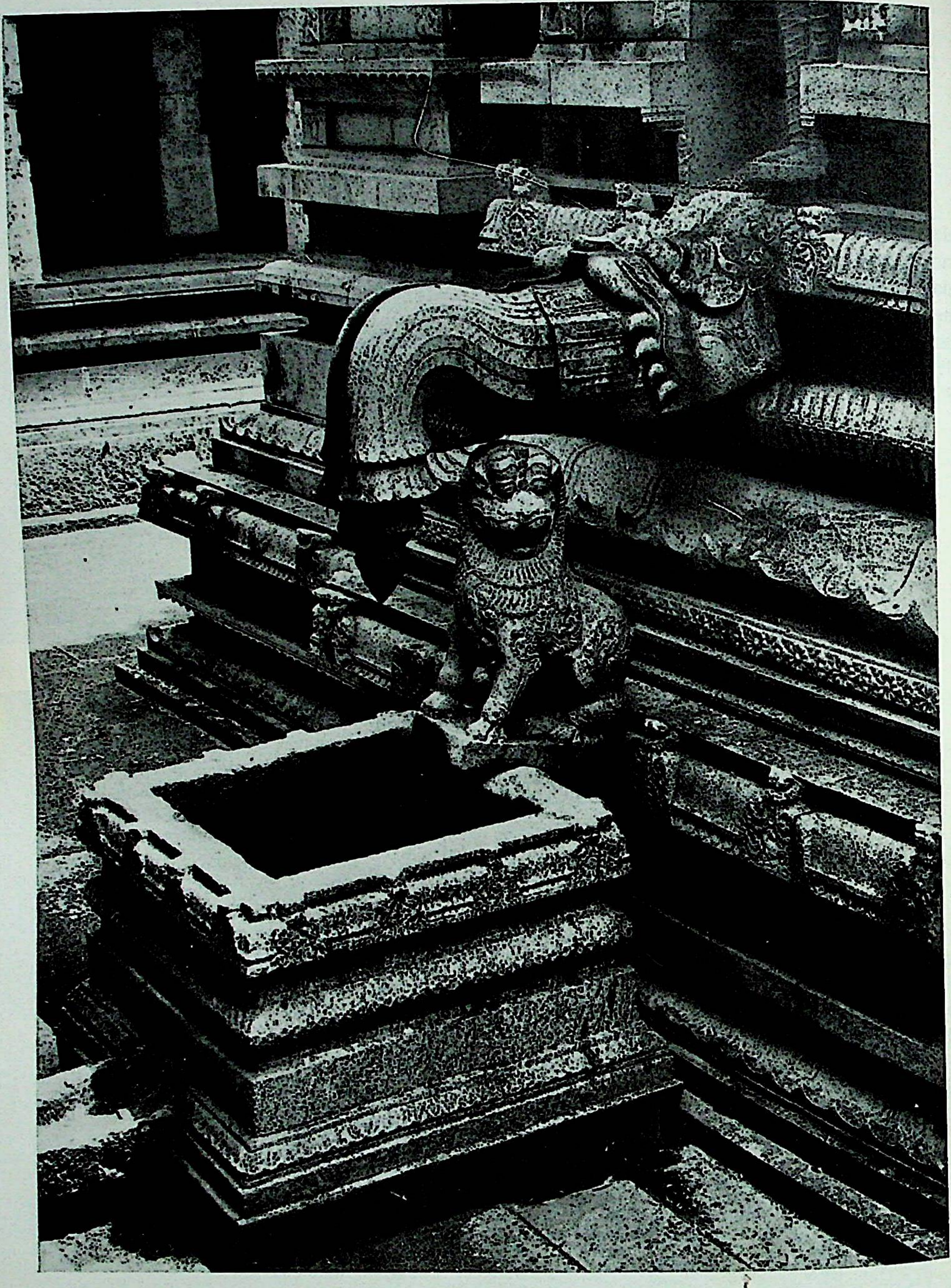



jalāyana
nāla
makara

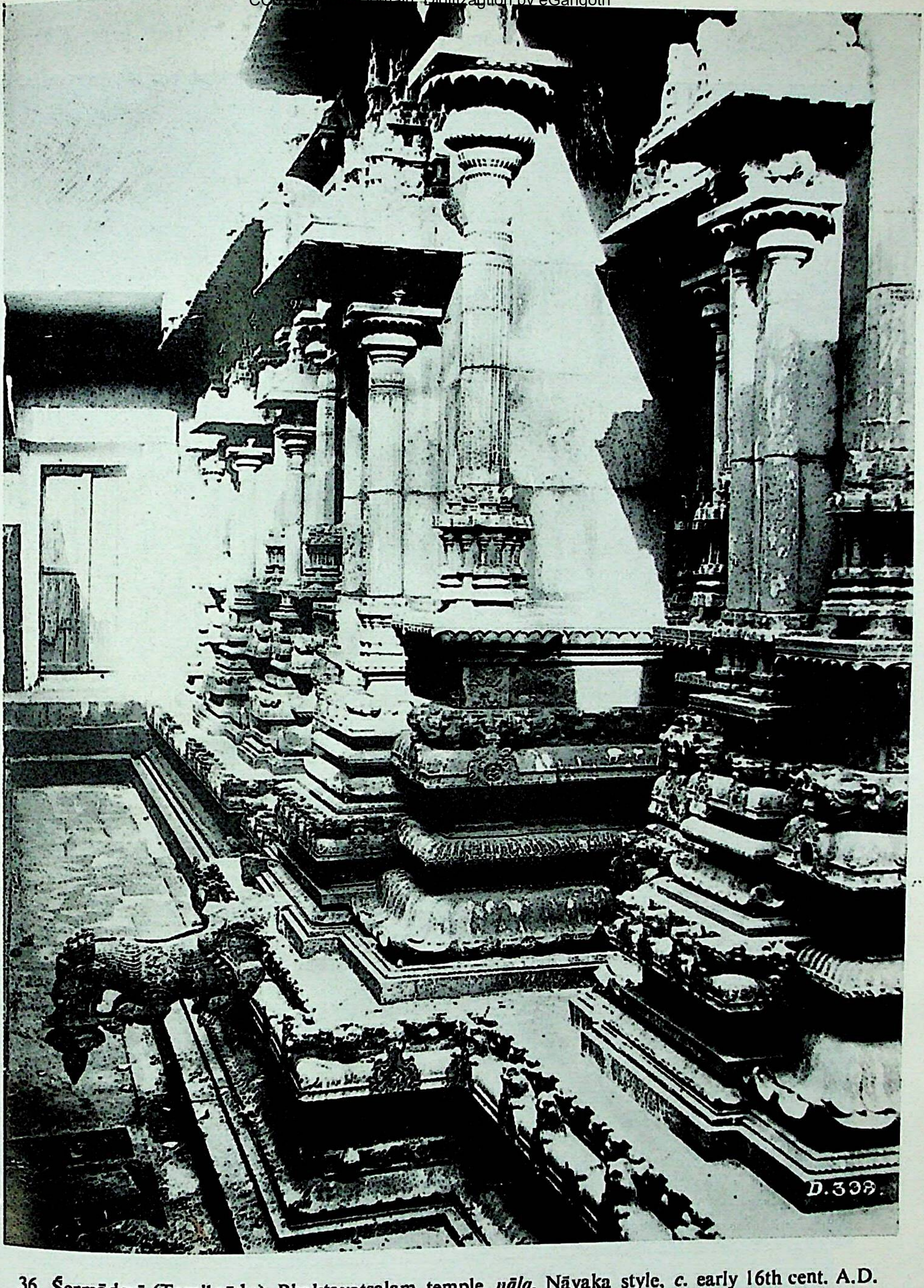
33.
Galaganātha (Karṇāṭaka). Galaganātha temple, *nāla*. Later Karṇāṭa style (Cālukya), c. A.D. 1025



34.
Dharasanguppe (Tamiḷnāḍu). Rāghaveśvara temple, *nāla*, Nāyaka style. c. 16th-17th cent. A.D.

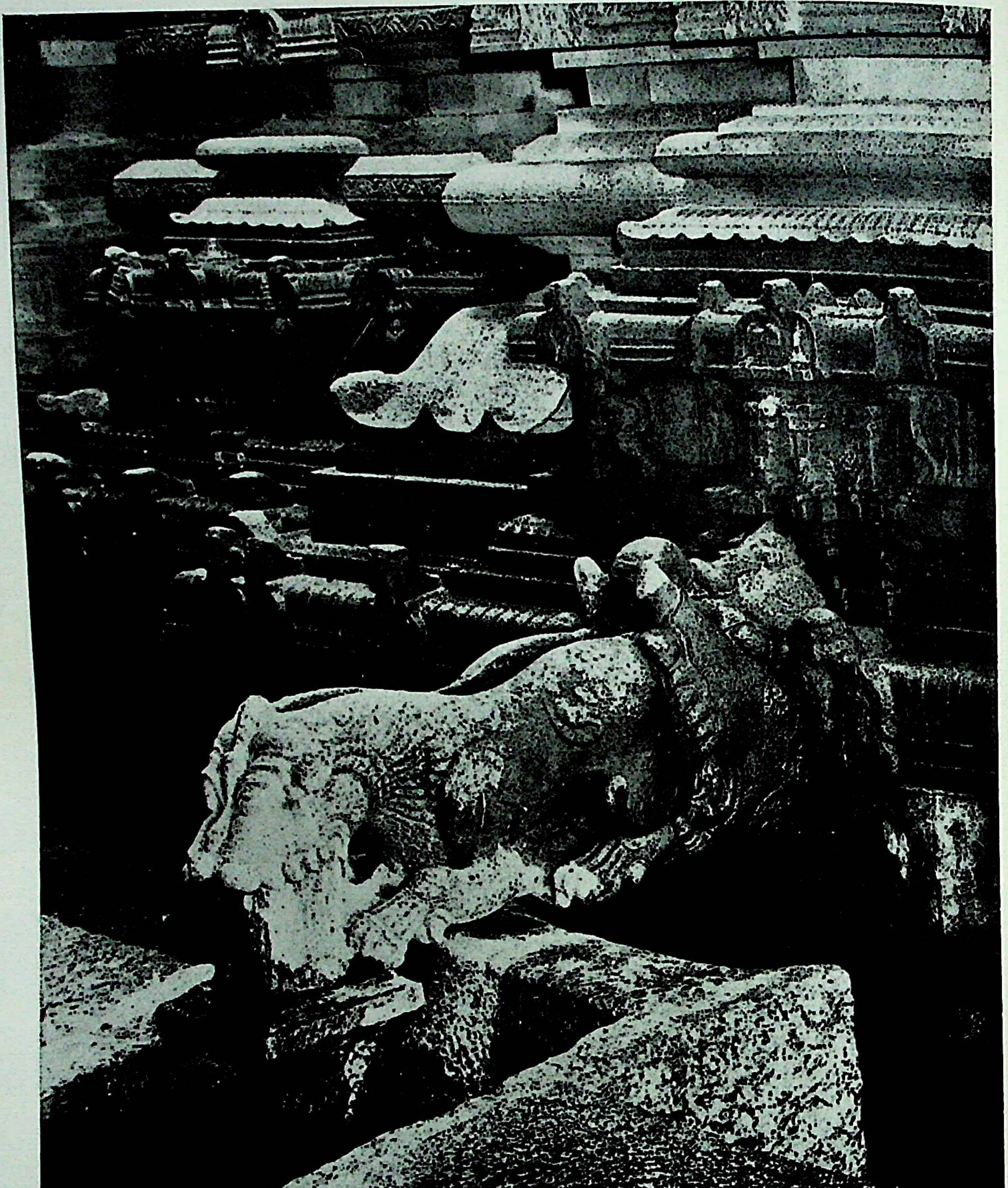


35. Śrīmuśnam (Tamiḷnāḍu). Vaiṣṇava temple, *nālu*. Nāyaka style, *c*. late 15th cent. A.D.

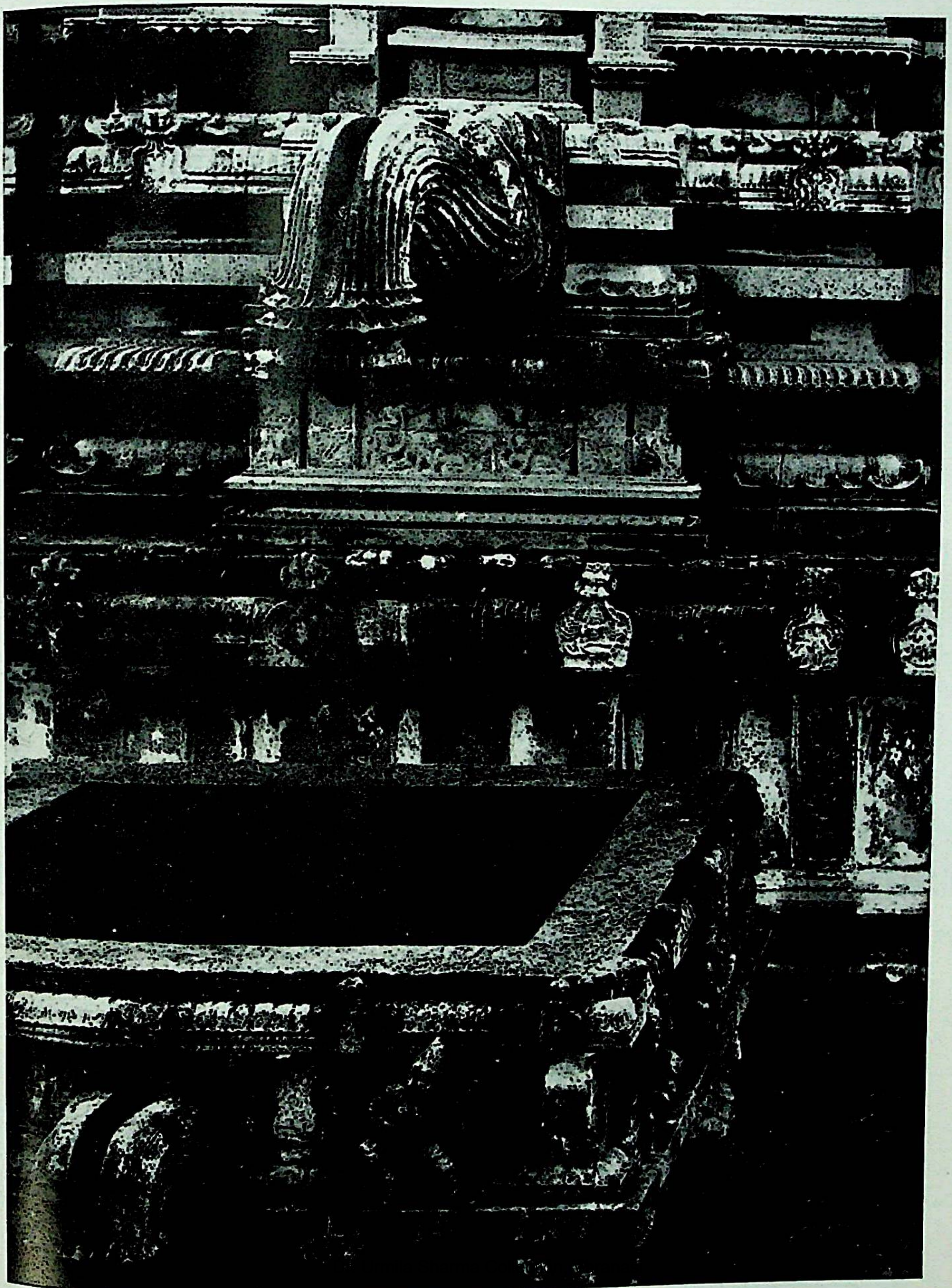


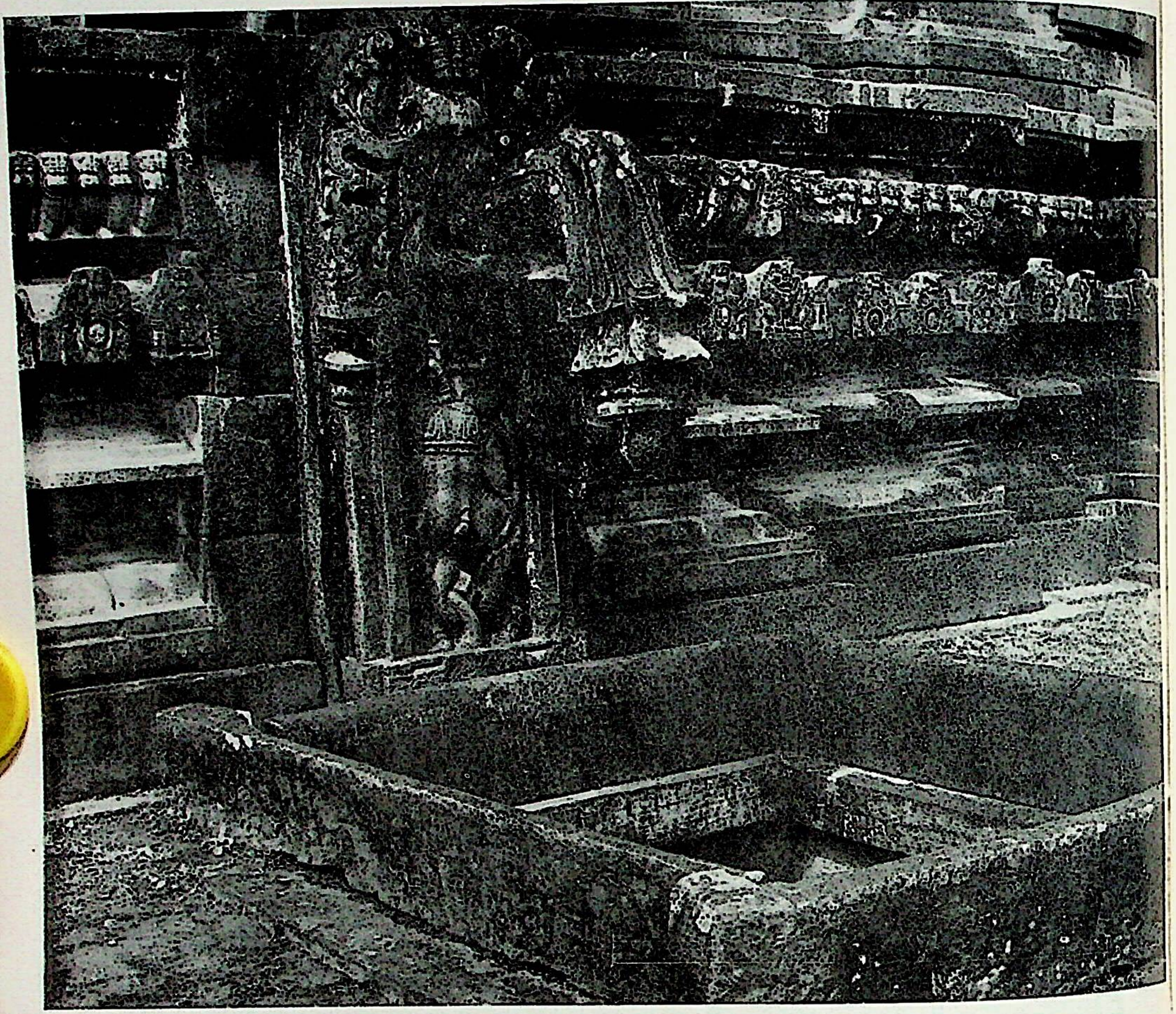
36. Śermādevī (Tamiḷnāḍu). Bhaktavatsalam temple, *nāla*. Nāyaka style, *c.* early 16th cent. A.D.

37. Kalakāḍu (Tamiḻnāḍu). Ambikā temple, *nāla*. Nāyaka style, *c.* late 15th cent. A.D.



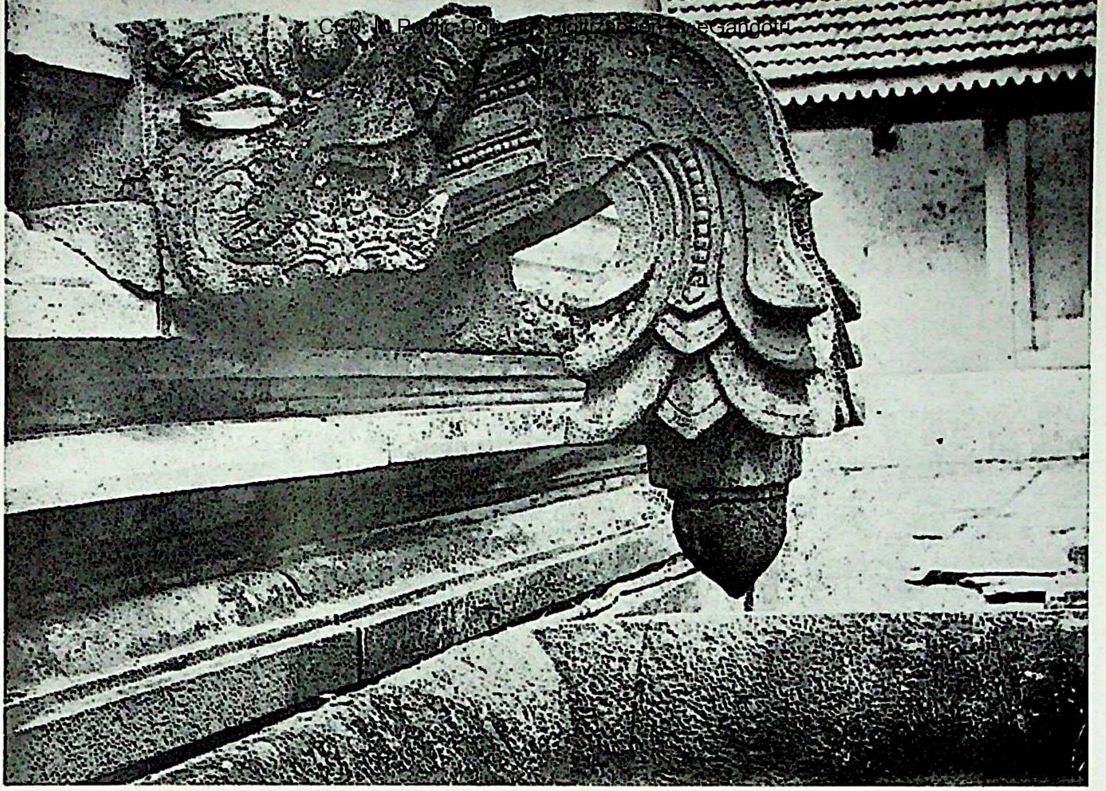
38. Tanjāvūr (Tamiḻnāḍu). Bṛhadeśvara temple complex, Subrahmaṇya temple, *nāla*-Nāyaka style, *c.* 17th cent. A.D.





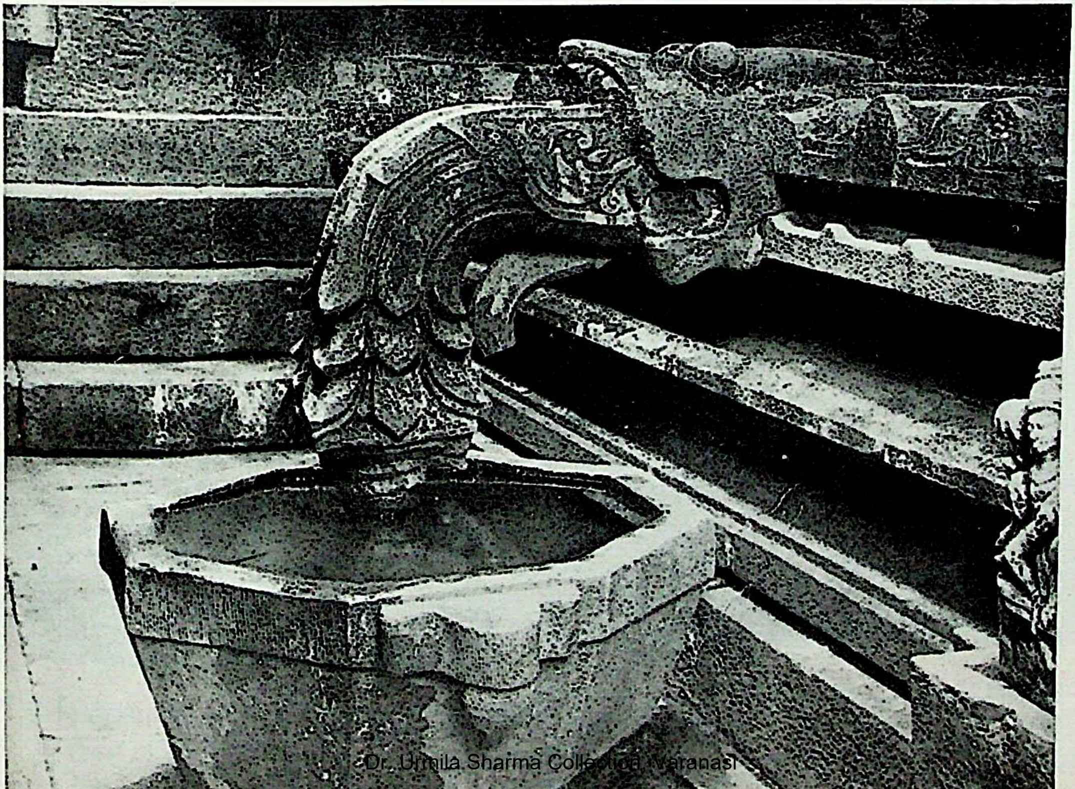
39. Ikkeri (Karṇāṭaka). Aghoreśvara temple, *siṁhanāla*. Ikkeri-Nāyaka style, *c*. A.D. 1515-1545

CC0. In Public Domain. Digitized by eGangotri

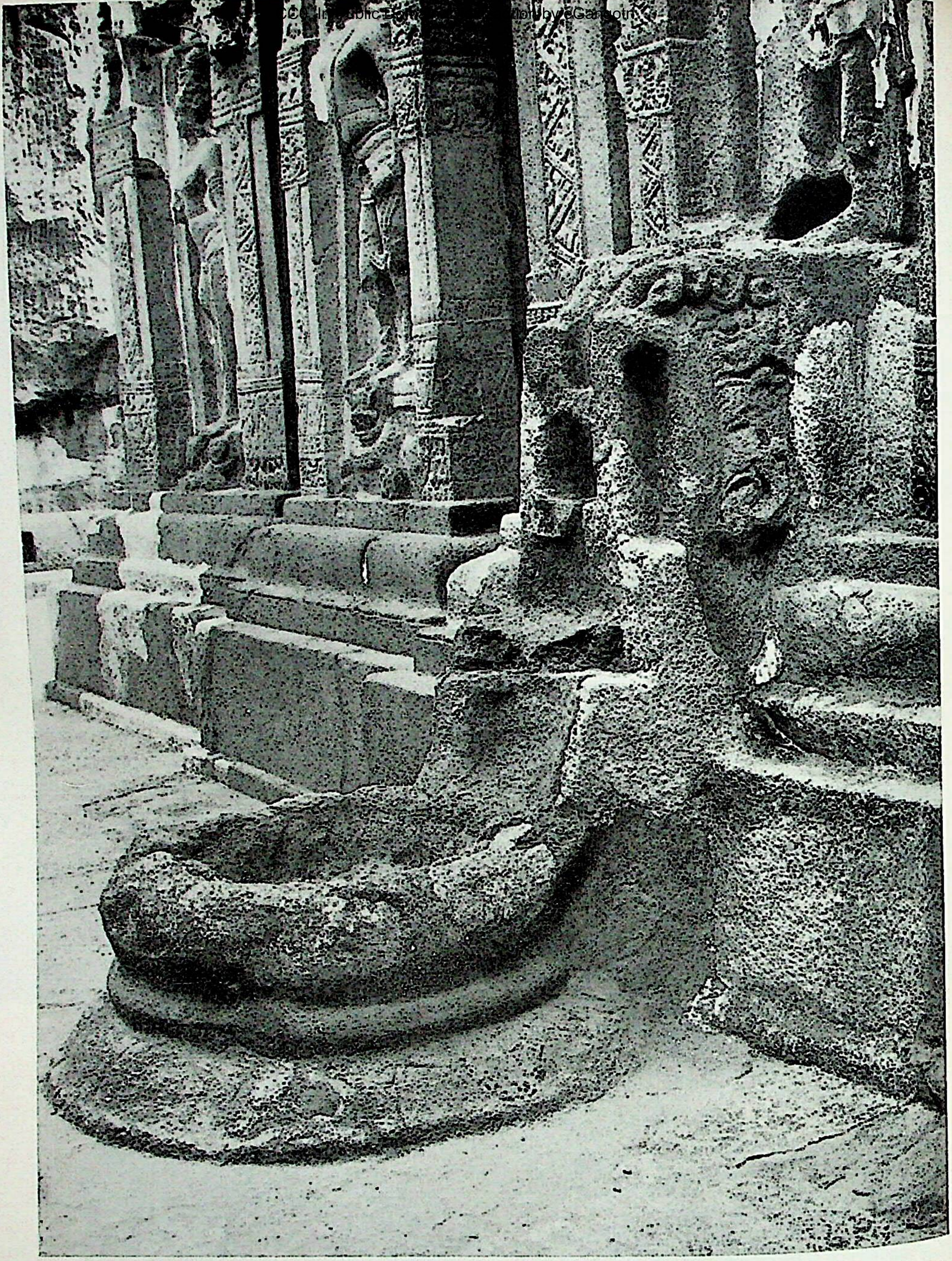


40. Keladi (Karṇāṭaka). Rāmeśvara temple, *nāla*. Keladi-Nāyaka style, *c*. early 16th cent. A.D.

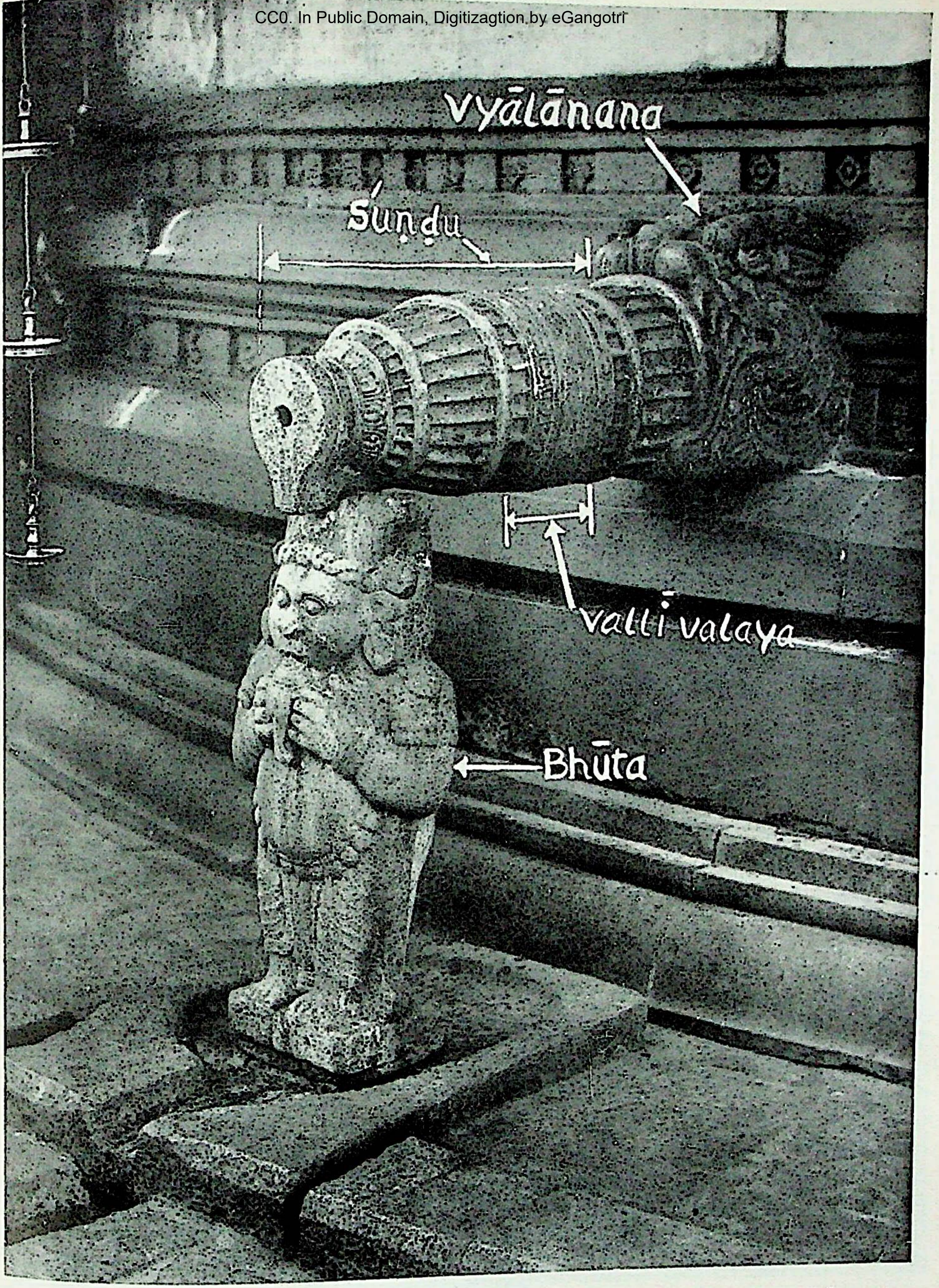
41. Keladi. Vīrabhadra temple, *nāla*. Keladi-Nāyaka style, *c*. early 16th cent. A.D.



CC-0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri

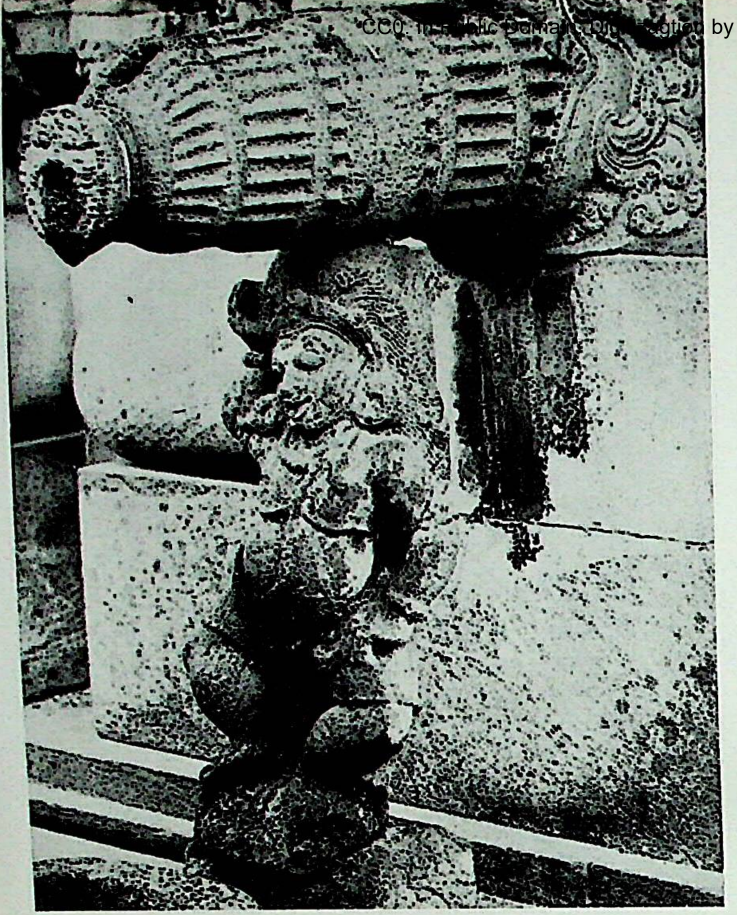


42. Ellorā (Mahārāṣṭra). Kailāsa temple, *praṇāla*. Early Karṇāṭa style (Rāṣṭrakūṭa), *c.* A.D. 756-776.

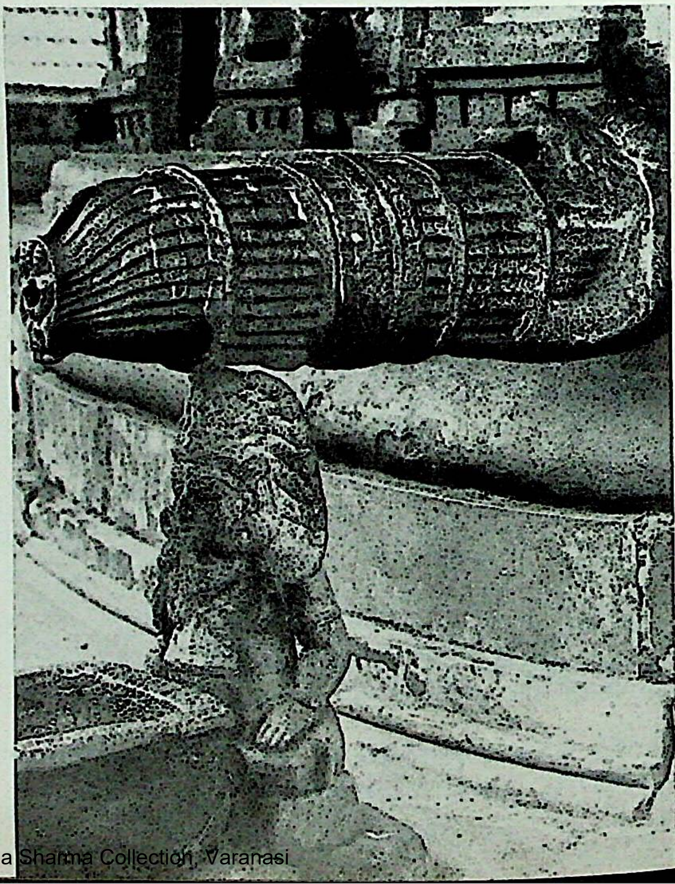

vyālānana
śuṇḍu
vallīvalaya
Bhūta

43. Triprayar (Tricūr:Keraḷa). Rāma temple, *vyāla-praṇāla*. Middle Keraḷa style, *c.* 11th cent. A.D. (Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India).

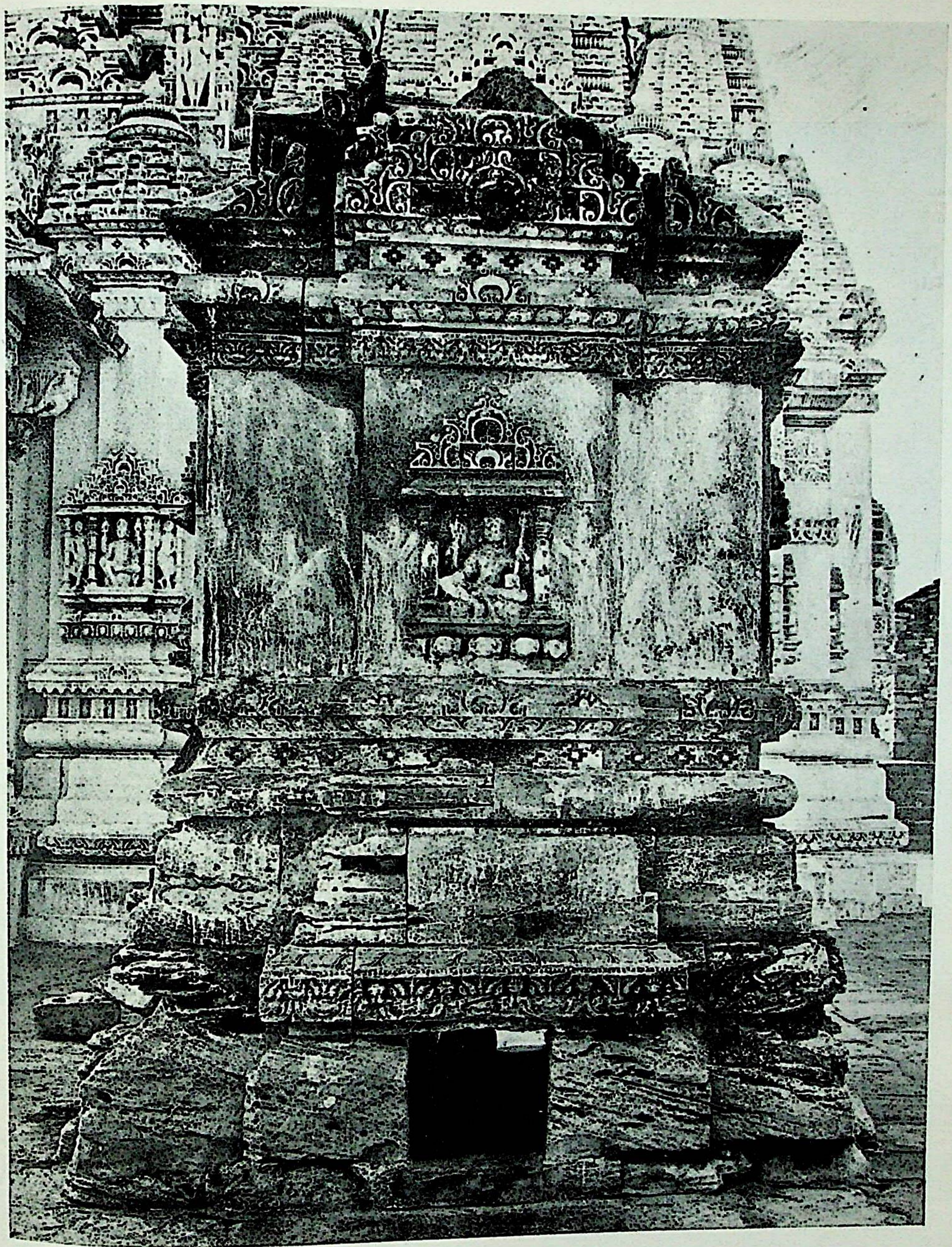
CC0. In Public Domain. Digitization by eGangotri



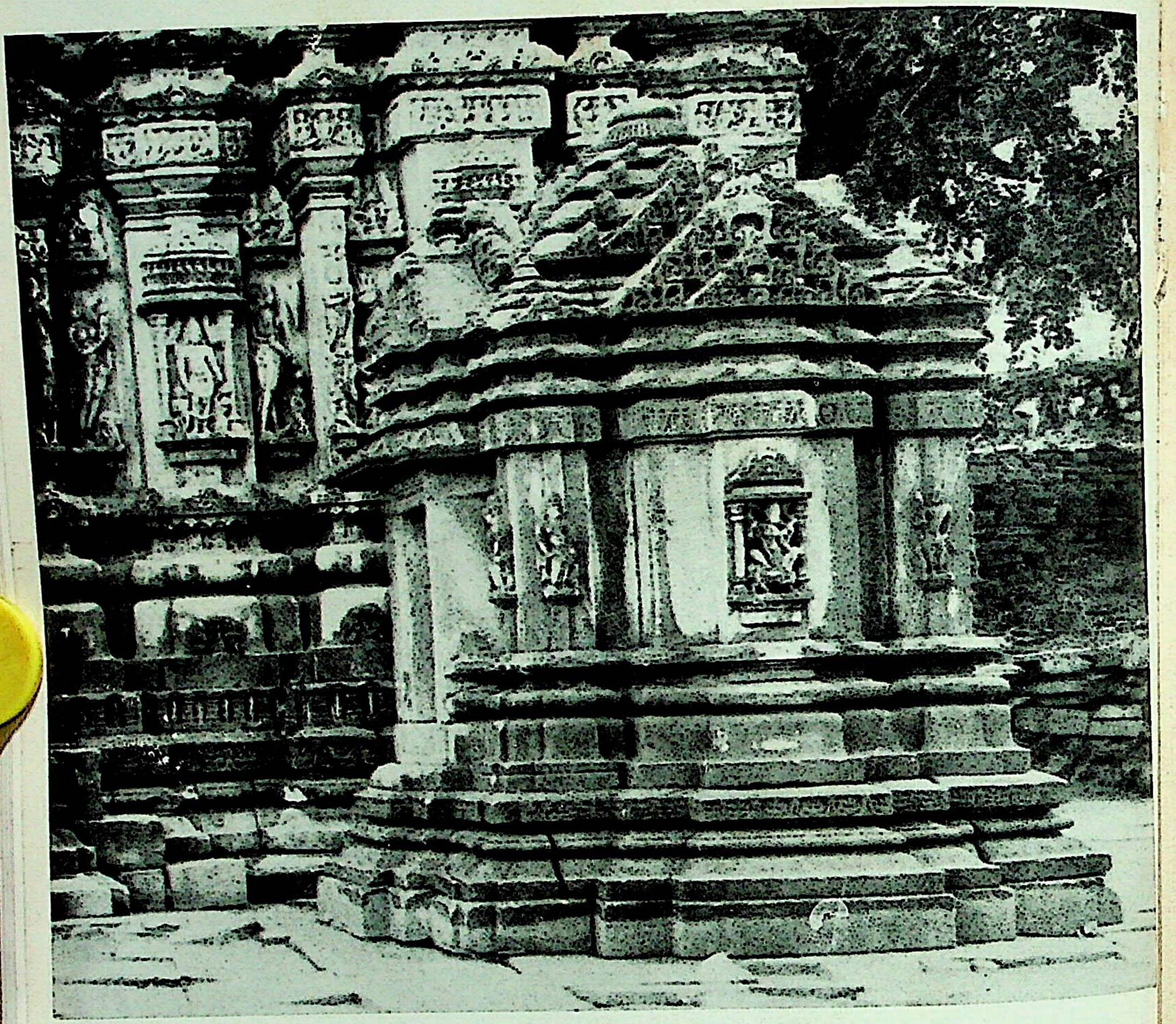
44. Tricūr (Keraḷa). Vaḍakkunnātha temple. *vyāla-praṇāla*. Middle Keraḷa style, *c.* early 11th cent. A.D. (Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India)



45. Tricūr. Vaḍakkunnātha temple complex. Rāma shrine. *vyāla-praṇāla*. Middle Keraḷa style, *c.* early 11th cent. A.D. (Courtesy: Archaeological Survey of India).



46. Taraṇetar (Saurāṣṭra: Gujarāt). Trinetreśvara temple, *snapana-gṛha*. Mahā-Gūrjara style (Cāpa), *c*. second quarter of the 10th cent. A.D.



47. Jagat (Rājasthān), Ambikā temple, *snapana-gṛha*. Mahā-Gūrjara style (Guhila), *c.* A.D. 961.

REPRESENTATION OF THE RĀGA-S IN PICTURES, POEMS, AND NUMBERS

ALAIN DANIELOU

Some of the recent theorics regarding the nature of the universe appear to be coming very close to those of ancient Hindu cosmology. According to the old Sāṃkhya system the universe has no substance. At the basis of all matter, all thought, all forms of life, we find only energetic relations organized in a mysterious substratum called ether *(ākāśa)*, the nature of which would be the same as that of the substratum of thought. The characteristic of this substratum is the possibility *(avakāśa)* it offers of apparent extension as well as an illusory divisibility which manifests itself in the co-ordinates we call space and time; but "the space enclosed in the urn is not really distinct from the outside space and ceases to exist independently when the urn is broken".

In this substratum, which is the first stage of creation, organized energy gives birth to atoms and to galaxies, as well as to all the visible or invisible forms of existence. After a period of extension, the worlds so created will be withdrawn, as if they were a dream; space and time will cease to exist.

The universe is thus made up only of relations, harmonies and rhythms, which can be represented in terms of relative space-time, of mathematical formulae, of frequency ratios. This idea is expressed in popular symbolism by saying that the world springs forth from the rhythm of Śiva's drum or from a primordial cry, a 'word' shouted into space-time and represented by the syllable AUM (or more exactly AUNg), which is said to contain the whole of speech, since it is made up of the triangle formed by the vocal organs : the guttural A, the labial U, and the cerebral Ng.

All that exists, or could exist, in the cosmic universe springs forth from a unique source and is built according to laws that are common to all aspects of creation. This is why we shall find in all the orders of existence, in all types of being, the same harmonies, the same numerical relations expressing parallel forms of organized energy. There are thus inevitable analogies in the hierarchy of celestial bodies, in the material elements, in the manifestations of life, to explain their subtle relationships and their mutual influences. Human beings are by their very nature linked to particular planets, metals, precious stones, trees, animals.

Nothing can exist in the universe that is not an expression of the formulae through which energy is organized. This is not the case for matter only but also for the subtle aspects of life, such as sensation and thought. We are only beginning to understand, through electronic memories, something of the mechanisms of memory and of thought which can be brought back to energetic relations.

On the basis of a conception of the fundamental unity of the visible and invisible worlds, Hindu philosophers have attempted to classify the various aspects of sensation, of thought, of life, and to analyse their common characteristics. The yantra-s, geometrical diagrams representing elementary numerical complexes,. are believed to correspond to particular orientations of the process of manifestation of the world, represented as particular divinities and linked with the various aspects of existence and life. They are the key to all aesthetics, to the harmony of living forms, and they are utilized to express this harmony in architecture and sculpture. We can experience these yantra-s within ourselves through the practice of yoga in the subtle centres which control the working of our vital organs, of our perceptions, of the mechanisms of thought, and control also the possibilities of contact with the suprasensible and supernatural worlds.

The numerical factors represented in the yantra-s are also found in music. They appear to us as harmonies. Music is the field in which we can most clearly realize the connection between numerical factors and emotions, *rasa*-s. With its help we can establish mathematical equations corresponding to our sensations and sentiments, which are but particular manifestations of a relationship of energetical elements similar to those that give birth to matter and life.

The number of planets that determine the character of the world in which we live (just as the number of electrons determines the nature of a particular element), is limited to 9. Our possibilities of sensorial perception is limited by our five senses which are the spheres of perception of the five states of matter (etherial, gaseous, fiery, liquid, solid).

The number of emotional states, the rasa-s, is limited to 9. The numerical factors which appear in perceptible harmonic relations do not go beyond the factor '5'. The number of sound elements which we can distinguish, and which form the material of all languages, is limited to 54 (6×9), and the number of musical sounds which we can distinguish within one octave is equally 54. The combination of the articulate and musical sounds, representing the totality of the sound-elements through which man can analyse, express, or communicate his thoughts, emotions, and sensations, gives the sacred number 108 (that is 54×2 or $1 \times 2^2 \times 3^3$).

The symbolic or emotional value attributed to the various syllables of articulate language, or to the relations between sounds in music, is not arbitrary. An octave, a fifth, a fourth, corresponding to numerical ratios (2/1, 3/2, 4/3), are in fact elements of sound-yantra-s of universal value. The articulate phonems will-serve to build the *mantra*-s, the magic formulae permitting communication between human and other states of being.

Relations established between musical sounds will permit the building up of *rāga*-s, scales corresponding to particular moods or emotional states, through which we may reach other states of being and communicate with the invisible, with spirits and gods. Mantra-s and rāga-s are the most adequate instruments of communication with other levels of being. They lead to mystical experience and are used in magic. They also act on the most profound aspects of the nature of the listener. One is transformed when exposed to their action. They are the instruments of spiritual progress, since they can bring man in contact with higher states of being.

The possibility of reducing an emotional state to a formula is not a theoretical speculation but an experienced fact. The Indian master-musician can very well indicate the numerical ratio corresponding to a *śruti*, that is he can put into arithmetical figures the frequency ratio corresponding to the interval, the exact pitch of a particular note in a *rāga*. He finds it easier, however, to describe the interval, the particular pitch of a note in relation to the tonic, through the type of feeling it evokes. Thus he will say (the tonic being C) : 'the A flat of Malkos is virile and joyful, that of Bhairavī is tender, that of Todī melancholy', thus helping the gifted student to play accurately the A flat plus of Malkos (8/5), the A flat of Bhairavī (128/81) or the A flat minus of Todī (25/16).

A *rāga* (the word means 'emotion') is formed of a scale, a sequence of notes, *svara*-s, corresponding to particular *śruti*-s, intervals, that have a definite emotional colouring. The scale is thus formed of a complex of notes representing the contrasting elements of expression—joyful, tender, sad, peaceful, aggressive, passionate, and so on—that the musician will bring forth with refined art.

To describe the particular emotional climate of a rāga, ancient theorists often made use of poems and pictures. These apparently have no material connection with the sound aspects of the rāga but represent, in another field, the same mood, the same emotional flavour or *rasa*, and help the musician to place himself in the very atmosphere he is to express by means of sounds.

We do not have very ancient pictures describing the rāga-s. Those existing (dating mainly from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) are made on the basis of the poems some of which are extremely ancient. The examples given here are taken from the Catvārimśatchata-rāga-nirūpaṇam, attributed to the sage Nārada, and also from the Rāga Sāgara and the various Rāga-mālā-s (cycles of rāga-s)

Examples of Rāga-s

The notes indicated are those of the natural diatonic. The signs + and –

22

indicate a note raised or lowered by one comma (81/80). Indian music has no fixed diapason. For convenience we have represented the tonic (Sa) as C.

The expressive character of the note is that indicated by the great vina-player, the late Shivendranath Basu of Varanasi.

The numerical ratios represent the *śruti-s* or intervals, that is the exact relation between the frequencies of the various notes and the frequency of the fixed tonic. The figures are similar to those used in the building of yantra-s, of images, of temples. The number '5' appears as the 'factor of life' which plays an important part in the emotional quality of the sound. One can easily know what will be the expression of a particular note from the corresponding numerical factors.

Lalitā (played at dawn).

"Lalitā young and fair, and garlanded with sevenfold flowers. Her eyes long, like the petal of the lotus. Sighing, overwhelmed by fate, still, at dawn, dressed for a lovers' meeting." *(Cat. rāga, 20)*

C	
Db—	tender, sleepy (256/243=$2^8/3^5$)
E+	awake, penetrating (81/64=$3^4/2^6$)
F	peace, beauty (4/3=$2^2/3$)
F sharp-	perturbed, sad, anxious (45/32=$3^3 \times 5/2^5$)
F sharp	acute, promising (64/45=$2^6/3^3 \times 5$)
Ab	undecided, expecting (128/81=$2^7/2^4$)
B+	gay, coming sunrise (243/128=$3^5/2^7$)

Vibhāsa (played at dawn)

"Fair, and fair of face, with a white scarf. Bold like the cry of the cock at sunrise, his laughter sways the locks that brush his brow. Vibhāsa-rāga is lovely like the god of Love himself."

(*Rāga-Kalpa-druma*, 30)

C	
Db—	subtle, tender (256/243=$2^8/3^5$)
E+	lovely, lively (81/64=$3^4/2^6$)
F sharp	mysterious, between night and day (64/45 =$2^6/3^2 \times 5$)
A+	joyful, loving (27/16=$3^3/2^4$)

Bhairava (played after dawn)

"His limbs smeared with ashes (that lovely body), his brow lustrous with the cool rays of the moon, trident in hand and mounted on a bull, such is Bhairava, and so the sages tell."

(*Cat. Rāga*, 13)

C	
Db—	praying, tender ($256/243=2^2/3^5$)
Db	calm, confident ($16/15=2^4/3\times5$)
E	calm, joyful ($5/4=5/2^2$)
F	peace ($4/3=2^2/3$)
G	power, strength ($3/2$)
Ab	interrogative ($128/81=2^7/3^4$)
B	soft, loving ($15/8=3\times5/2^2$)
B+	self assertive, joyful, active ($243/128=3^5/2^7$)

Todī (played late morning)

“Her slender body anointed with saffron and camphor, gleams like the jasmine-flower. The woodland deer are spellbound at the sight of Todī splendid, holding a lute.”

(*Cat. Rāga*, 15)

C	
Db—	tender ($256/243=2^8/3^5$)
Eb—	pathetic ($75/64=3\times5^2/2^6$)
F sharp+	intense ($36/25=2^3\times3^2/5^2$)
G	sunshine, confidence ($3/2$)
Ab	tender ($128/81=2^7/3^4$)
B+	obstinate, desire ($15/8=3\times5/2^3$)

Yavanī Todī (played late morning)

“Yavanī Todī is fully ripe, a foreign girl. Richly dressed, her hair plaited upon her brow, she wears golden ear-rings shaped like flowers and set with precious stones. Skilful, she plays in the morning languidly, sipping the wine of grapes, letting her white limbs and lovely form be seen.”

(Rāga Mālā of Pundarika Vitthala)

C	
D	self-asserting, contented $9/8=3^2/2^3$)
Eb	desire, appealing ($32/27=2^5/3^3$)
F	soft, peaceful ($4/3=2^2/3$)
G	clear, awake ($3/2$)
Ab	mature, appealing ($128/81=2^7/3^4$)
Bb	love, beauty ($16/9=2^4/3^2$)
Bb+	selfish, erotic ($9/5=3^2/5$)

Bhairavī (played late morning)

"She, whom poets in their vision see as great-eyed Bhairavī, golden consort of Bhairava, enthroned on carved crystal on the peak of Kailāsa, with cymbals in her hands, worships Him with the leaves and flowers of the lotus."

(*Cat. Rāga*, 13)

C	
Db—	tender, peaceful ($256/243=2^8/3^5$)
(D)	active, self-confident ($9/8=3^2/2^3$)
Eb	tender, affectionate ($32/27=2^5/3^3$)
F	calm, satisfied ($4/3=2^2/3$)
(F sharp)	tension ($64/45=2^6/3^2\times5$)
G	awake, sunshine ($3/2$)
Ab	praying, tender ($128/81=2^7/3^4$)
Bb	submissive ($225/128=3^2\times5^2/2^7$)
Bb	tender ($16/9=2^4/3^2$)

Sāranga (played at midday)

"His sombre limbs mighty in armour, are covered with a yellow robe. Armed with discus, mace, and bow, and bearing a shield, his gleaming quiver full, holding a lotus and a conch, adorned with sumptuous ornaments, Sāranga rides upon the bird-form Garuda."

(*Rāga Mālā*)

C	
D	active, powerful ($9/8=3^2/2^3$)
F	satisfied, calm ($4/3=2^2/3$)
G	joyful, sunshine ($3/2$)
Bb	beauty ($16/9=2^4/3^2$)
Bb+	desire, love ($9/5=3^2/5$)

Chāyānata (played at sunset)

"Chāyānata, fair limbed, with a pink turban and, about his throat, a jewelled necklace. How pleasant is his polished speech ! At evening, by the roadside, surrounded by friends, a sweet ball of flowers in his hand, bold and amorous with reddened eyes he laughs aloud at the passers-by."

(*Rāga Mālā*)

C	
D	confident, joyful ($9/8=3^2/2^3$)
E	calm, pleasing ($5/4=5/2^2$)

F	peaceful, lovable ($4/3=2^2/3$)
F sharp	aggressive ($64/45=2^6/3^2\times5$)
G	joyful, active ($3/2$)
A	soft, graceful ($5/3$)
(Bb)	beauty, tenderness ($16/9=2^4/3^2$)
B	sensuous, soft ($15/8=3\times5/2^3$)

Kānaḍā (played after sunset)

"I see Kānaḍā, a sensuous woman who plays the stronger part in Love's gentle fights. Her limbs are dark, her ornaments charming and strange. Her open tresses fall to her waist. She remains playfully near a banian tree, her hand caressing the muzzle of a deer."

(*Rāga Sāgara*, 3.34)

C	
D	strong, firm ($9/8=3^2/2^3$)
Eb+	sensuous, satisfied ($6/5=2\times3/5$)
F	calm, peace ($4/3=2^2/3$)
G	joy, activity ($3/2$)
Ab+	enterprising, loving ($8/5=2^3/5$)
Bb	noble, beautiful ($16/9=2^4/3^2$)
Bb+	desire, anxiety ($9/5=3^2/5$)

Kāfi (played at night)

"Of shining whiteness, Kāfī, who inspires lust tenderly sits on the lap of her playmate in the royal palace. Fond of parrots, she is dressed in blue and decked with jewels. She is the image of sensuousness. In the lotus of my heart I cherish her, lovelier than Lakshmī the goddess of Fortune."

(*Rāga Sāgara*, 3.33)

C	
D	confident ($9/8=3^2/2^3$)
Eb	tender, affectionate ($32/27=2^5/3^3$)
F	calm, peace ($4/3=2/3$)
G	joy, activity ($3/2$)
A+	enterprising ($27/16=3^3/2^4$)
Bb+	desire, pleasure, passion ($9/5=3^3/5$)

Vasanta (in spring)

"Parrots, cuckoos, and Shāri birds flutter about Vasanta, Lord of spring, who dances in the garden of Love surrounded by lovely women. His image never leaves my heart."

(*Rāga Sāgara*, 3.17)

C	
Db—	tender ($256/243=2^8/3^5$)
E	soft ($5/4=5/2^2$)
F	calm ($4/3=2^2/3$)
F sharp	active, tense ($(64/45)=2^6/3^2\times5$)
A	expectation, softness ($5/3$)
B	eager for pleasure ($15/8=3\times5/2^3$)
B+	active, creative ($243/128=3^5/2^7$)

Megha (during the rainy season)

"The ancients tell of Megha rāga, lustrous like a blue lotus, the divine smile of his moonlit face is sweeter than ambrosia. Clothed in yellow in the midst of heavy clouds, he shines among the heroes. The thirsty chātaka-birds that drink only raindrops, at the sight of him cry out for water."

(*Sangīta Darpaṇa*, 2.76)

C	
D	confident, strong ($9/8=3^2/2^3$)
E+	pleasing ($81/64=3^4/2^6$)
F	calm, peace ($4/3=2^2/3$)
G -	joyful, active ($3/2$)
Bb	beauty, love ($16/9=2^4/3^2$)
Bb+	desire, expectation ($9/5=3^2/5$)
B	enjoyment ($15/8=3\times5/2^3$)
B+	intensity ($243/128=3^5/2^7$)

RĀGAMĀLĀ ICONOGRAPHY IN THE PAHARI TRADITION :

Some Corruptions, some False Etymologies

B. N. GOSWAMY

From the state of Mandi in the Panjab hills comes an interesting story relating to the reign of its most famous ruler, Raja Sidh Sen.[1] His son, Shivjwala Sen, then a prince, had, it is said, two wives, both of whom gave birth to a male child at exactly the same time, on the same day. Since succession ordinarily depended upon the law of primogeniture, this gave rise to a serious problem. The old Raja, wishing to settle even the issue of his son's succession in his own lifetime, thought of a device. He decided, the story tells us, to have the two children, when they had grown a little, brought into the *darbar*. At some distance from them were placed two objects : a lump of clay and a sword. The children were then allowed to move about. The one that went to the sword and began picking it up, the Raja thought, was evidently fit to succeed to the throne. He received the name of Shamsher Sen, *shamsher* meaning a sword, while the one who went to the lump of clay was called Dhurchatia, 'dust-licker'; the word *dhur* means dust, and *chatiya* 'he who licks it'. The issue thus settled, and Shamsher Sen having exhibited his royal proclivities early, there were no problems when Shivjwala Sen died young. Shamsher Sen ascended the throne in 1722, even though he was only five years of age at that time.

The unlikely name of Dhurchatia thus passed into history. It has been repeated in account after account, but it is more than possible that the entire story is an invention. The real name of the 'younger' prince who did not succeed was more likely to have been 'Dhurjati', a perfectly good epithet of Śiva, in Sanskrit, meaning 'the one with the matted locks'. Few people, however, being able to make sense of this rather obscure name, it was soon corrupted into 'Dhurchati' and then to 'Dhurchatiya'. The story, with its attempt at explaining the name, followed. Thus a false etymology became a part of history.

The phenomenon of false etymology is by no means unknown elsewhere in India, but it acquires added interest and meaning in certain given situations. Among these may well be the unusually confused state in which we find the iconographies of the Rāgamālās in the Pahari tradition.

---

[1] The story is told, at the appropriate place, both in Man Mohan's *History of Mandi State* and J. Hutchison and J. Ph. Vogel, *History of the Punjab Hill States*, (1933), Volume II.

The subject of Rāgamālā paintings is subtle and complex, and it is doubtful if we have begun to grasp the true connection between music, poetry, and painting, as it once obtained. Even at the more obvious level of iconographic visualization of musical modes, one gets the feeling that something is eluding us. This, despite the very detailed and determined work that has been done in the field from the early and pioneering writings of S. M. Tagore, O. C. Gangoly, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and Kannoomal, to those done in the last twenty years by Professor and Mrs. Waldschmidt, Klaus Ebeling, M. S. Randhawa and A. L. Dahmen-Dallapiccola, and others. An enormous amount of visual and textual material has been brought together and collated in these works, charts made, tables drawn, different approaches tried; all this in order to make some sense of the seemingly disordered state in which we find this extraordinary output of the Indian artist. The attempt is to find a self-consistent system, a method. The task has not been easy, for there are great variations from region to region and period to period, but some semblance of method is beginning to emerge; not, however, from the Pahari region. There, everyone seems to give up. Some peculiarities appear in the iconographies followed in this area and when they are compared to the systems elsewhere, the Pahari output is prominently mentioned as an exception. Klaus Ebeling[2] devotes a whole separate section to Pahari iconography (pp. 272-96), and Professor Waldschmidt concluded, after devoted attempts to solve some iconographical riddles,[3] that "today, no doubt is left that the painters of the Rāgamālā pictures in the Western region of the Himalayas centrally pursued a tradition which, according to iconography, had a completely differing orientation from that followed by the miniatures in vast zones of the rest of India".

There are differences in the names that occur as labels on Pahari drawings and paintings of the Rāgamālās, and there are differences in visualization. At every step, therefore, writers have had to offer reservations about the Pahari interpretation of some Rāgas and Rāginīs. One finds this not only in any one series, like that in the Berlin Museum, or the early one in the National Museum, nearly all series present problems. The Kṣemakarṇa (Meṣakarṇa) system, broadly followed at many other places, does not wholly apply here. Noting this in his work, Ebeling states[4] :

"In contrast to a few large Rāgamālās from the plains, which follow verses 12-29 (of the Kṣemakarna Rāgamālā) exclusively...early Pahari painters drew their inspiration from both sets of verses as well as from the literal meaning of the name of the Rāga. A number of Meṣakarṇa's verbal iconographies in verses 12-97 are visually weak, especially those of most Rāginīs. Thus, they were of little use to the

---

2. *Rāgamālā Painting* (Basel, 1973).
3. *Miniatures of Musical Inspiration* (Wiesbaden, 1967), Volume I, p. 34.
4. *Rāgamālā Painting*, p. 272.

painters who created the first Pahari Rāgamālās and thereby established this iconographic tradition."

Part of the problem arises, undoubtedly, from the fact that seldom do we find detailed verses, like those that occur in the Rajasthani painting, either on top or at the back of the Rāgamālā paintings from the hills. Most often, all that we get are labels or captions which barely identify the Rāga or the Rāginī; in the latter case, there is also mention of whose *bharaja* (=Sansk. *bhāryā)* she is. The *rāgaputras* are likewise related to a family. This brief note is generally followed by a number, referring evidently to some scheme, a family tree, to which we do not have access at present. If labels are about all that we have, the problem becomes compounded because these are most often inscribed in that very difficult and obdurate script of the hills, Takri, in which vowel indications or nasal sounds are considerably condensed, if not altogether eschewed. The same word is capable of being read in more than one way. What is 'Kalinga' in Hindi could become 'Kalig', or, in another hand, 'Kali-naga', from where an interpretation could easily move on to 'Kaliya-Naga'.

No single Rāgamālā set from the hills seems to fit neatly into a known system, even in terms of the names of Rāgas and Rāginīs. And when it comes to visualization, the matter takes on bewildering proportions. One can take, as examples, two Rāginīs, both iconographically very well established and known from repeated representation in paintings from other parts of India : *Asavari* and *Todi.* Asavari is conceived almost always as a dark-skinned woman placed in a mountain setting where she plays with snakes coiled around the trunks of sandal trees or moving up to her and held with amazing ease in her own hand. A typical *dhyāna* of Asavari, thus, reads[5] :

> "On the summit of the sandal-wood mount, robed in peacock plumes, with a splendid necklace strung with pearls and ivory, the variegated one drawing to herself from the sandal-wood tree the serpent—the proud one wears it as a bracelet, (her body) ablaze with dark splendour."

The iconography of Asavari, one would thus imagine, is clear and unmistakable. In the hills, however, we find, at least in one series in the National Museum (ref. Ebeling, p. 285), Asavari shown as a pregnant woman reclining on a couch in a part of the palace, while a female attendant sits close to her feet and massages them. The lady in the Berlin series also seems to be in the same state (Waldschmidt, I, Fig. 46).

To take the other example, Rāginī Todi we see very often elsewhere in India representd as a *virahinī nāyikā*, playing upon a stringed instrument in the forest while

---

5. See A. L. Dahmen-Dallapiccola, *Rāgamālā Miniaturen von 1475 bis 1700* (Wiesbaden, 1975), p. 393.

deer come to her, attracted by the plaintive music that she makes[6] : A *dhyāna* of Todi thus reads :

> "Having a beautiful face like a colourful lotus...Enticing with the handful of grass the young does of the outskirts of the forest. This is Todi, charming like a garland of lotuses."

In at least two series from the Pahari region, however, one reproduced by Ebeling (p. 286, No. 349) and the other by Randhawa[7] *(Rāgamālā*, p. 76, No. 46) we find Todi visualized as a beautiful woman seated on a low stool inside her home; she is spinning on a spinning wheel while a female attendant sits by her side.

Evidently all that is common, at least here, is the name. The setting is different; so is the mood. The disparity between the standard visualization of these Rāginīs from elsewhere and that from the hills throws any attempt at systematization or classification out of joint. It would of course not be true to say that there is nothing at all in common between the Pahari Rāgamālās in general and those from outside the hills. At several points, recognizability is instant and there is little room for doubt. One can give several examples. Thus Hindola is as much a noble lord seated in a swing, attended upon by female companions in the hills as he is in the plains. Patmanjari here, as elsewhere, has the significant presence of a cat sitting by the side of the Rāginī, and Deshakhya is seen in the hills, as in the plains, as a healthy man engaged in bodily exercises of different descriptions. But it is the differences. which attract attention. Some attempts have been made to explain these differences One of many possible explanations is that the label and the pictures, as Ebeling suggested in an article in 1971[8], are sometimes mismatched. A painting gets a wrong label, even a wrong verse sometimes, for the inscriptions were often placed at a time later than the painter, and this naturally led to confusion. Another possibility is the one that I brought up with Klaus Ebeling when he was researching for his book on Rāgamālā painting : that the Pahari painter sometimes had recourse to literal meanings of the names of Rāgas and Rāginīs when interpreting them. In his book, Ebeling does bring this point in. He also speaks of the Pahari artist finding it much easier "to portray the animals or activities whose voices or sounds are compared to the music in verses 98-109 (in Kṣemakarṇa's text). As nowhere else in Rāgamālā painting these painters were also tempted again and again to play on the literary meaning of the name or of a word closely related to it in sound."[9]

---

[6] A. L. Dahmen-Dallapiccola, p. 208.

[7] M. S. Randhawa, *Kangra Rāgamālā Painting* (New Delhi, 1971), p. 76.

[8] Klaus Ebeling, "Confusing Icorographies in Rajput Rāgamālā," *Bulletin of the Museum and Picture Gallery, Baroda,* Volume XXIII,1971.

[9] Ebeling, *Rāgamālā Painting*, p. 272.

I believe that there are further possibilities in this approach than those so far explored. In this one could be helped by visualizing and explaining the situation as it might have obtained in the hills. Could it be, one wonders, that what reached the hill from the plains—and one has to assume that the tradition really originated in the plains and was transmitted to the hills at a late point of time—was not a whole text but some fragment of a text like Kṣemakarṇa's *Rāgamālā* ? One can think of a fragment which gives only the names of the Rāgas and Rāginīs in a condensed form and not detailed *dhyānas*. There are, to be sure, versions of the Rāgamālā, like the well-known one in the Guru Granth Sahib. That Rāgamālā opens thus with a stanza like this[10] :

> "One Rāga, accompanied by his five wives,
> Also his eight sons.
> First was made the music of the Rāga Bhairava.
> And sang also the five Rāginīs, his wives,
> First, Bhairavi, then Bilavali,
> Sang Punyaki, and Bangali,
> Then came the turn of Aslekhi
> These are all the five wives of Bhairava
> They sing; Panchama, Harakh, and Desakh,
> Bangalam, Madhu and Madhav, they sing;
> They sing Lalita and Bilavel,
> These eight sons of Bhairava, excellent music modes.

Other stanazas follow, but in none of these is there anything more than a list of the Rāgas and their wives and sons. There are no indications of mood; there is no mention of time of day, no iconographical suggestions of any kind.

Kṣemakarṇa's *Rāgamālā,* on the other hand, the source of many a painted Rāgamālā set, contains specific *dhyānas* of a large number of Rāgas and Rāginīs in detail. This occurs in some other texts too. But not all the *dhyānas* refer to sufficiently distinctive images, and there is much that is common between the description of one Rāga or Rāginī and another. There is an emphasis on the beauty of the person of the Rāga or Rāginī, on jewellery, clothing, and the like. In others, as we notice, action is involved, and the settings are specific. In these, no doubt is left about how a particular Rāga or Rāginī could be visualized. Even in texts with detailed *dhyānas,* however, it is of interest to note that there are passages which contain condensed information in which the names of Rāgas and Rāginīs are packed in encapsulated form. In Kṣemakarṇa, in verse 98-109 most of the names of the Rāgas and Rāginīs come in, for example, the first verses from this part run like this[11] :

---

[10] Rep. in Randhawa, *op. cit.,* p. 66.

[11] Translated in Waldschmidt, I, pp. 43-44.

> "The (Rāga) Bhairava producing (the sound) Om with his own voice is sung by the bee with the buzzing of its fragrant wings; the (Rāga) Malakausika (is sung) by the goat, the (Rāga) Hindola by the cuckoo, the (Rāga) Dipaka by the sevenrayed (the fire), the Rāga Śrī by the elephant, the (Rāga) cloud (i. e. Megha) by the peacock, the (Rāgaputra) Spring by the cock ; the snake, however, sings the (Rāginī) Abhirini".

As Professor and Mrs. Waldschmid point out, Kṣcmakarṇa emphasizes relationships between animal voices and musical modes in the verses that follow. For example :

> "The boar, indeed (sings the Rāginī) Gundagirika, 'and the ass (the Rāginī) Gaudi', 'the hare the Rāginī Dhanaśrī,' 'the dog the (Rāginī) Saverika', 'the *makara* the (Rāgaputra) Gambhira', 'the cat the (Rāginī) Patamanjari', 'the bee, flown high into the air, speaks the Rāgaputra, Bhramara', 'the horse the (Rāgaputra) Sindhu', 'the female water buffalo the (Rāginī) Vairati'. Again, the first half of the stanza 101 says : "Mostly the female antelope praises the (Rāginī) Gujrati, the nude antelope (?) the (Rāgaputra) Velavala, the wild goose the (Rāgaputra Lalita, and flock of cranes incessantly speak the (Rāginī) Sorathi."

Other sounds are used : The noises of natural phenomena like the rumbling of the clouds, the fluttering of garments in the wind, the rushing of water-falls, and the like. Musical clues are also discovered in certain sounds made by human activities, such as the cooking of food, the tinkling of anklets, the grinding of beans, and so on.

It would seem that the Pahari painter, once he was on to the idea of personifying Rāgas availed himself freely of passages such as these. The presence of a cat in the Patmanjari, of a hare in the Dhanaśrī, of a bull or water buffalo in Vairati, is prominent and indicates that he incorporated these elements as the result of hints taken from some text. Certain other names of Rāgas and Rāginīs must have appeared to him to be self-explanatory; thus *Bhāskara* suggested to him quite easily the sun, *Candra*, the moon, *Megha* the clouds, *Vasanta* the season of spring, and so on. But in the absence of full texts, he must also have decided to eschew repetition, and to innovate within limits. On occasions he might have been tempted to interpret things. Faced with a host of names, I would not be surprised if he went up to a pandit whose help he must often have sought while painting sets such as the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the *Gīta Govinda*, the *Behari Satsai* or *Nala Damayantī*, and posed his problem to him. What came out of this consultation often was a literal interpretation of a name, bearing no connection with the musical mode. As I see it, thus, Asavari becomes a pregnant lady because the word 'Asavari', read one way, would be the equivalent of *ummīdvāri* (Persian *ummīd* = Hindi *āśā* hope), an expression so commonly used in the Pahari area and in the Panjab plains for pregnancy. Todi features a spinning wheel either because of *todana*, to snap, which could apply easily to a thread on a spinning wheel or, as one informant tells me, because *todi* refers to a small wooden piece close to the spindle in a spinning wheel.

Nothing can be said with certainty, but reference to local usuage and familiarity with the Pahari dialect might clear some matters up. If the Pahari painter was on a literal trail, Andhreyali would be shown by him with a dust storm (from *āndhi* or *andheri*, duststorm) with two young ladies protecting their eyes, and a blind flapping in the strong wind. Surmanand makes reference to *sūrmas* or warriors, two of whom are shown in battle. Gajadhar is shown with a man bearing a mace, the Pahari word for it being *gaja* (Hindi *gada)*; likewise Nata is engaged in acrobatics because that is what a *naṭa* in real life does. Velavali, in an unusual representation, shows a woman with a child in her lap or beckoning a child, as if she is in the act of diverting his attention or appeasing him. Quite possibly the idea comes from Pahari *vilāṇā* which is to quieten down through offering temptation, the same as *behlānā* in Hindi. Kuntala might be making a prominent reference to the lock of wavy hair that the Rāga wears, and Sanehi, sending a message comes almost certainly from *sanehā* (Hindi *sandeśa* message).

One could go on like this, but not everything will fall into place. Quite obviously, it is all literal interpretation. There are points where the Pahari paintings of the theme are very close to the Rajasthani or the provincial Mughal. We do not know what texts or fragments the painter had access to, or how he formulated his approach. Was the Pahari painter, one wonders, being in part playful, in part inventive ? Was he aware of the false etymologies that he was using ? Had he elected to free himself suddenly from the rigidity of the convention ? Did he decide that dangers of dullness lurked in painting picture after picture with animals indicating musical sounds, and women carrying the same musical instruments ? Or was he availing himself of some local text that we have no access to, a text that interpreted afresh, in its own way, at least some of the musical modes that we know of from the plains systems ?

These knots will not easily be untied, and one might have to live long with the uneasy fact that in the Pahari area of Rāgamālā painting we are in a twilight world of repetition and innovation, of shrewd understanding and plain ignorance. There is no neat system into which things can be organized. At least not yet. Iconographic accuracy or otherwise, then, one might have to make one's mind up about these paintings—and some of them are great works—in their own terms, and not because they make necessary references to the world of music.

It is possible that there is no future in speculations like the ones here gone into. We might have to leave the matter at this : that the broad outlines of the Rāgamālā system have been reasonably well established elsewhere, and that glimmerings of some of it can be seen also in the Pahari Rāgamālā sets. Doing this might be no great loss, for iconography, after all, is only a small part of the totality of creative effort which went into Rāgamālā painting. With all their corruptions and their discrepancies, even inconsistencies, the fact remains that Rāgamālā paintings embody an attempt made nowhere else in the world, and it is to the understanding of their essence, their method, that we must pay closer attention. In paintings, as in music, we must remind ourselves of the need to distinguish between the *śarīra* and the *ātmā*, the gross and the subtle. At the present moment it appears that we were close to losing touch with the second because we are intent upon the first.

"HAIR" AND "SHADING" IN PAINTINGS FROM ORISSA

EBERHARD FISCHER

Although suggestions of a three-dimensional effect in the form of lighter areas in fields of colour or darker areas at the margins[1] can be found as far back as the paintings at Ajanta (ca. 5th-8th Centuries AD)[2] and also in book illustrations in the Bihari Pala Dynasty style (12th Century)[3], true shading does not appear until the Moghul period[4] and the work of certain derivative Rajasthan schools (such as Mewar, around 1700)[5]. The incidence of light casting hard shadows on one side only remains however rare and has in all cases clearly been inspired by European painting[6] (as at Kutch, around 1800, for instance, or the painting of Kalighat (Calcutta) around 1870)[7].

The *Pata* painting of Orissa,[8] traditional gouache on fabric to produce devotional pictures, playing cards, mementoes and the like, is devoid of shading. Colours are applied in a predetermined sequence to fabrics previously primed with chalk and glue and then slightly polished. The preliminary draft is usually executed in red ochre or orange, which are also used to fill in certain of the areas. Normally, there then follow yellow, green, blue, red and white, after which the outlines and details are added in black. With very rare exceptions, each colour is used once only, being applied to the design wherever required before the next is taken.[9] Sometimes red is used instead of black for some of the outlines and details. Traditionally, line width remains constant, with neither attenuation nor broadening. The coloured areas are uniform in tone, intensity being adjusted painstakingly in advance, using coconut shells as mixing vessels (a little orange, for instance, being added to yellow to break the hardness of the tone). There are no actual mixed colours or colour transitions such as different tones of green.

---

[1] The following terms are used in a *chitrasūtra*-text, according to C. Sivaramamurti, *The painter in ancient India*, 1978, New Delhi, p. 30 : *patraja,* cross hatching, *binduja*, stippling, *raikhika*, fine lineation, the general term for delineation of depth being *vartana.*

[2] See D. Barrett and B. Gray, *Indische Malerei*, 1963, Genf, p. 29.

[3] See the catalogue "*Inde, cinq mille ans d'art*", Paris, 1979, No. 114.

[4] See M. C. Beach, *Grand Mogul imperial painting in India*, 1978, Williamstown, p. 20, Pl. 53 or 54.

[5] See R. Skelton, *Indian Miniatures from the XVth to the XIXth centuries*, 1961, Venice, Pl. 10.

[6] See S. C. Welch, *The art of Mughal India*, 1963, New York, or S. C. Welch, *Room for Wonder*, 1978, New York, p. 20. B. N. Goswamy and A. L. Dallapiccola, More paintings from Kutch, in *Artibus Asiae* 40, 283-294.

[7] See M. Archer, *Indian paintings from Court, Town and Village*, 1970, London, Pl. 40-44.

[8] See D. Pathy, Pata paintings of Orissa, Pl. 65-68.

[9] See the film of Barbara Fischer and D. Pathy "Spielkarten Herstellung in Orissa", 1979, Museum Rietberg Zurich.

The strength of *Pata* painting resides in the organized composition of the individual areas of colour and in the power of the brushwork line, which is rarely interrupted and produces continuous outlines and details. Technically speaking, this school of painting has undoubted affinities with palm-leaf engravings, and it is therefore unfortunate that present-day *Pata* painters have been trying to add a third dimension to their figures by inserting regular shading inside the outlines,[10] though they have at the same time adhered to tradition in their colour application methods, composition, etc. Only a few *Pata* painters, from the Puri/Cuttack/Bhubaneshwar district, have refrained from adopting this deplorable modern innovation.[11]

What led to the introduction of this shading in the middle of the 20th Century is the question. It derives, of course, from European art. The biggest influence on traditional painting[12] was exerted by the hachuring in the steel-plate engravings mainly exported to India,[13] but later also produced in India itself, chiefly at Calcutta. However, there is a second and local, traditional source of influence—the representation of hirsute figures in 19th-Century Orissan art, and even earlier in the art of Western and Central India.

When my friend Dinanath Pathy took me to visit the Virinchi-Narayana Temple at Buguda[14] in Ganjam District, I was struck by one of the exquisite murals of the early 19th Century, a picture of a *Narasiṁhan*, the lion-*avatāra* of *Vishnu*. Fine, parallel shading lines are visible within the outline, the aim clearly being to indicate that the god has the skin of a lion. None of the other deities or human figures has this eyelash-like shading, but many of the animals do. The shading of the outline denotes the tense energy of the god who, his mane bristling, has seized his adversary, the demon prince *Hiraṇyakaśipu*, and has laid him across his knee to disembowel him.

---

[10] There might be an exception to this in some palmleaf-manuscripts where blouses of girls show shading around the edges as in the title-page of *Marg* XIII, 2.

[11] This does not apply to the painters of the Ganjam District, South Orissa.

[12] With respect to Moghul painting, cf. the various examples, e. g. M. C. Beach, *The Grand Mogul*, 1938, Williamstown, Pl. 54.

[13] A good sample will be found in S. K. Ray, *The ritual Art of the Baratas of Bengal*, 1961 Calcutta, Pl. 19.

[14] The earliest report on the paintings in this temple will be found in Ch. Fabri, *History of the Art of Orissa*, 1974, Bombay.

Similar shading of the inner side of outlines is also to be found in other *Narasiṁha* pictures, such as that at the Temple of Jagannatha at Dharakota. In addition, in Ganjam District this indication of hair is also associated with *Hayagrīva/Kalkin* and important simian figures such as *Hanuman*[15] and *Sugriva*. In the case of actual animals such as bears or water buffalos, a shaggy coat may be indicated by multiple shading of the inner area.[16]

This method of suggesting bristling hair also exists in Indian painting from areas other than Orissa. The closest approximation is probobly the illustration of two fighting monkeys on a Cooch-Behar book cover dating from around 1800.[17] Here, again, the hair of the two monkeys is bristling and the parallel shading is located inside the outline. By contrast, monkeys not in a state of excitement, such as the dying King *Bali*, do not display these perimeter "eyelashes".

There are strikingly early examples of parallel folds in clothing to produce a three-dimensional effect in the painting of South Rajasthan (Mewar, in the famous Bhagavata Purana Manuscript, ca. 1570)[18] and in that of Central India (Malwa, the Ragamala Series of Rajgarh, ca. 1640).[19] The folds in the sleeves in the former (and in the trouser-legs in the latter), for example, all consist of closely juxtaposed lines, slightly curved to indicate the rounding of the limbs.

Monkeys, painted at Malwa (see above, ca. 1650) frequently display shading inside the outline [20] This is particularly noticeable in a gigantic picture of *Hanuman* in his "cosmic" form; his coat bristles as he radiates energy. Here again there are parallel shading lines inside the outline and all round the body.[21]

To determine whether a cultural exchange took place between these two regions—Central India and Orissa—(as seems probable) and whether the representation of bristling hair inside the outline is based on technical or aesthetic considerations would require a comparatively extensive study of Orissa painting.

---

15. An interesting picture of Hanuman in a relatively early *Pata*-painting from Puri shows similar hachuring of the arms and head, S. M. Archer, *Indian paintings from Court, Town and Village*, 1970, London, Pl. 45.
16. A wonderful, unpublished example in a palmleaf manuscript is on loan to the Rietberg Museum Zurich : Durga fighting a buffalo.
17. See R. Das Gupta, *Eastern Indian Manuscript painting*, 1972, Bombay, Pl. 92, p. 6f.
18. See Sh. E. Lee, *Rajput Painting*, 1960, New York, Pl. 3a.
19. See E. Binney 3rd, *Rajput Miniatures*, 1968, Portland, Pl. 45b.
20. See E. Binney 3rd, *Rajput Miniatures*, 1968, Portland, Pl. 45a.
21. See K. Khandalavala and M. Chandra, *An illustrated Aranyaka Parvan in the Asiatic Society of Bombay*, 1974, Bombay, Pl. 3.

24

A LIVING TRADITION OF ŚILPA IN ORISSA

SADĀŚIVA RATH ŚARMĀ

Although Orissa still has a great number of sthapatis working in stone (estimated about 630, among whom about 130 are preparing mūrtis), there are only very few who work strictly in accordance with the Śāstras. In the last hundred years, about 35 temples have been built, out of which only one is made of stone, namely the Hanuman Temple of Bara Akhara Math (Puri); but all follow the traditional rules of architecture. In certain areas (specially Puri and Ganjam), the sthapatis consult Pandits about the *dhyāna* of the Pūjā image, since they themselves have forgotten the tradition.

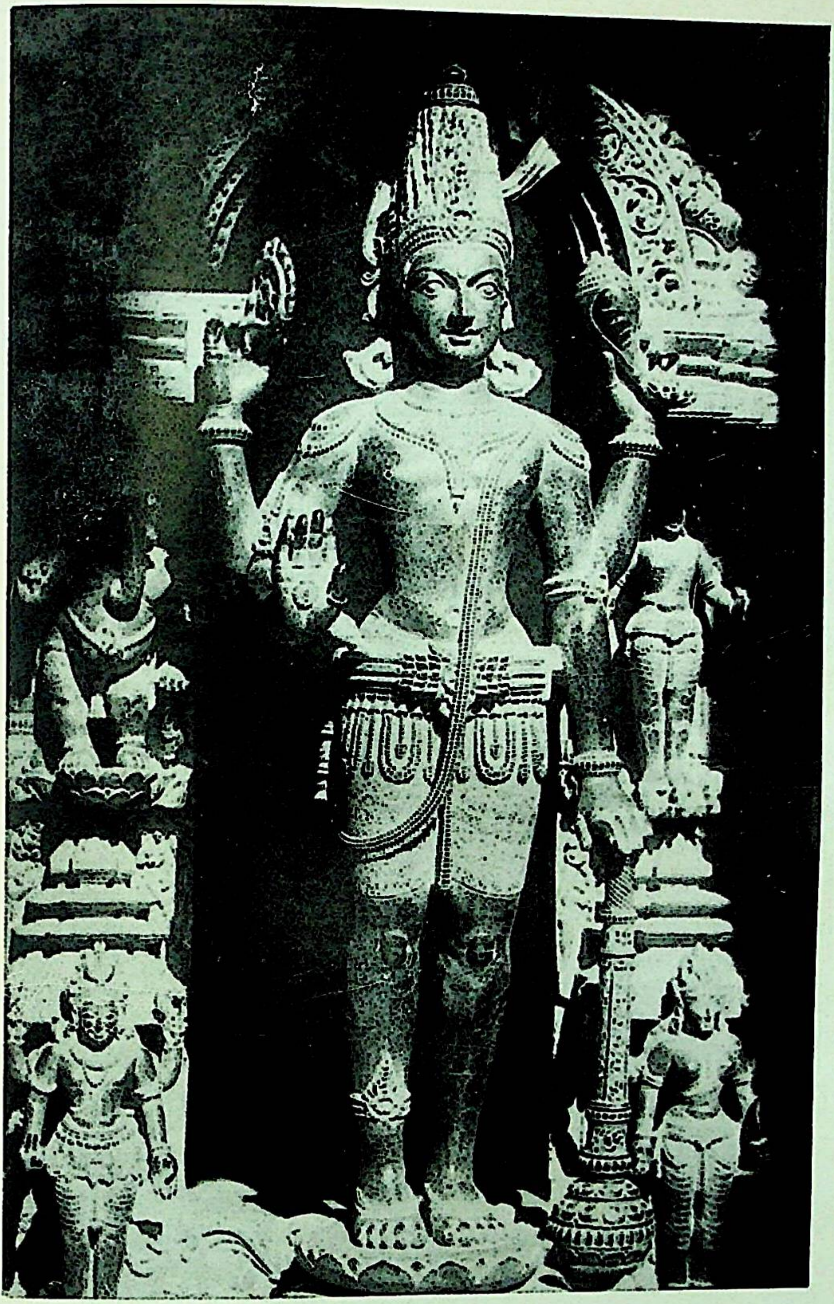
When the Satyanarayana Samiti of Uttaradvara, Puri, decided to set up a Satyanārāyaṇa image in a new temple, Sri Bhubanesvar Mahapatra (of Bali Sahi, Puri) was awarded the task of preparing the mūrti under my guidance.

In 1976, a four-tonne block of granite was brought from Nilagiri, and in 1977 the ritual of setting the *pañjara* (compositional diagram) was performed in the presence of Dr. Alice Boner. She was happy to see the *pañjara* still being used by living sthapatis, since this tradition seems to be lost in many parts of India.

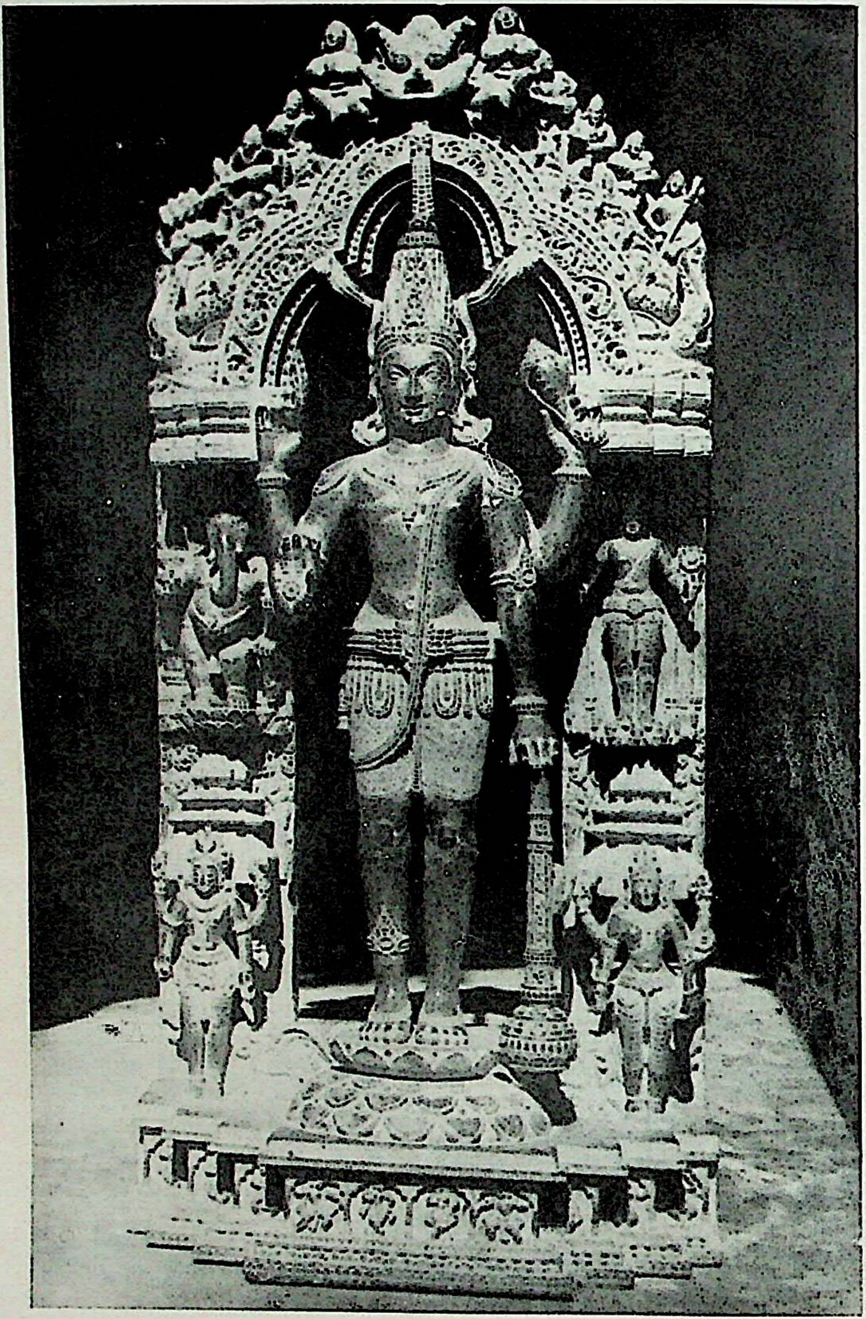
Bhubanesvar Mahapatra set to work at the *saptatala mūrti* of Satyanārāyāṇa with four helpers. The stone was so hard that about 200 chisels were broken in the course of the work. It took about three years to complete the image.

The iconography follows the description given in the Padma Purāṇa, Revakhaṇḍa, and in the Pratimā Lakṣaṇa. This mūrti has been prepared for *pañcadeva pūjā* with Satyanārāyaṇa as the central figure, which is special to Orissa. He is flanked on his upper right by Gaṇeśa, on the upper left by Sūrya, and on the lower right and left by Candraśekhara and Gaurī respectively. Above the mūrti is a *kīrtimukha* with a *tribhaṅga toraṇa*, on which a *devabandha* is represented on the right and a *gandharvabandha* on the left. Since there is no image of Lakshmī, she is represented in a *padaka* in the heart of Satyanārāyaṇa (as mentioned in the Pratimā Lakṣaṇa).

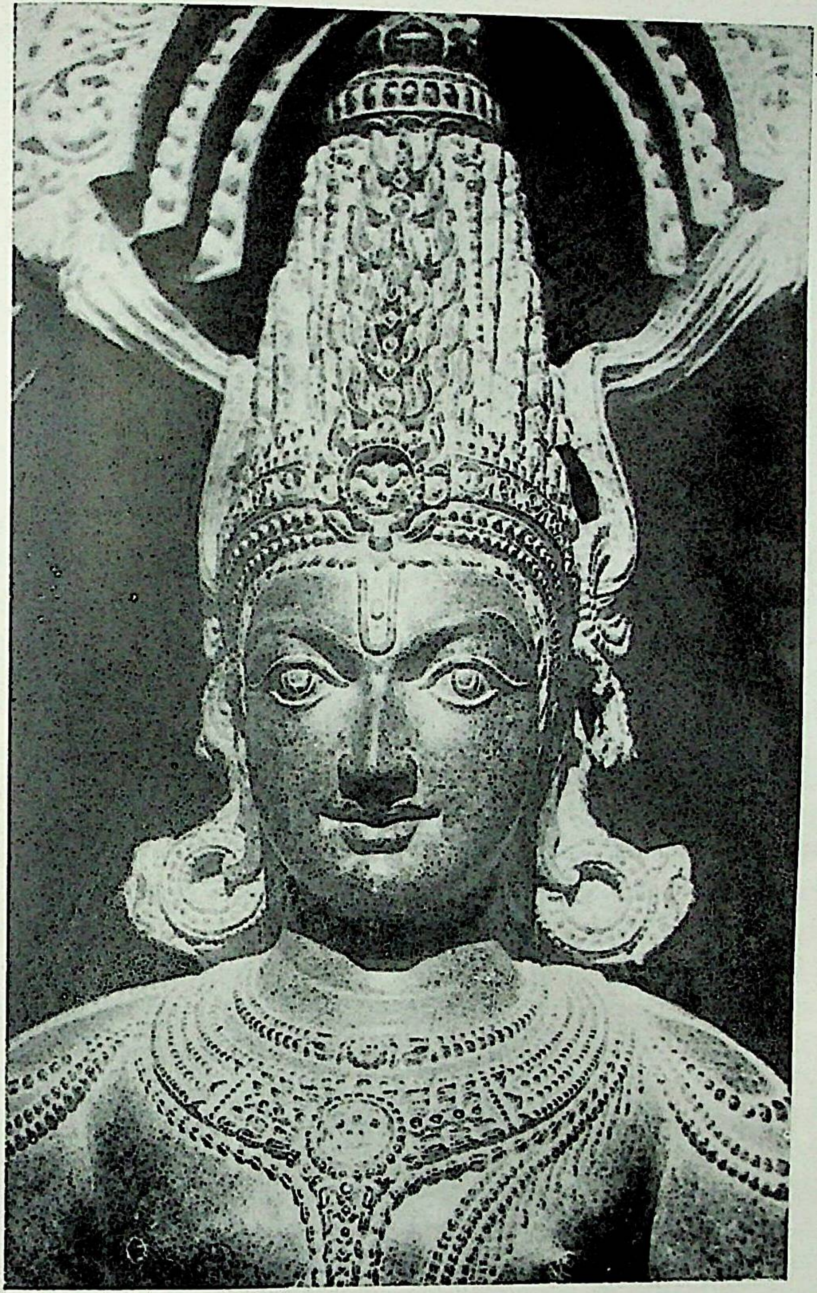
This sculpture, which has been carved exquisitely and which comes close to the Koṇārka style, is a unique achievement of the living tradition of Śilpa in Orissa.



1. Satyanārāyaṇa mūrti. (Photos: Ashutosh Sinha).



2.



3.

4. Sri Bhubaneshwar Mahapatra (Photo B. Bäumer).

EUROPEAN REACTIONS TO INDIAN ART

HEINZ MODE

A couple of years ago Partha Mitter published a book "Much Maligned Monsters" with the subtitle "History of European Reactions to Indian Art". The fascinating subject has been treated with great care and much labour, yet it could hardly be expected to have received an exhausting treatment. Materials are far spread and little research on the subject had been done before. European discovery of Indian art is even today by no means completed, but as a new road of approach has been opened, it may be permitted to walk along this road and to make it a bit safer. Partha Mitter has mentioned in the bibliography a book by Ernst Schierlitz, Die Bildlichen Darstellungen der Indischen Göttertrinität, Hannover 1927. The text however fails to exploit this older publication in german language. Schierlitz traced the pictorial reproductions of the Indian gods Brahma, Śiva, Viṣṇu in the ethnographical literature of Europe with striking acriby, unfortunately merely by quotations. Had his little book been fully illustrated, it would have probably been better utilised, particularily by non-german readers. Here I wish to select only one remarkable instance, broadly discussed by Schierlitz, but missed by Partha Mitter. The authority refered to is no less a person, but Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, being called an ethnographer by Mitter, in reality a famous german missionary praised for his outstanding service to the study of south-indian religion in the early 18th century. His manuscripts remained unpublished for more than a hundred years owing to the distrust of his missionary superiors, except for an anonymus selection printed in the year 1791. Even worse, 28 illustrations of Indian gods, which Ziegenbalg had collected and sent to his missionary home institution at Halle along with his manuscripts, remained unknown and seemed to be lost for ever. Schierlitz however recognised three of these pictures used by quite a different author and having been published in the year 1724. Partha Mitter again quotes the book without refering to the illustrations and without being aware of Schierlitz's interpretation. This book too is a classical publication by Mathurin Veyssiere de La Croze, Histoire du Christianisme des Indes. A la Haye 1724. Opposite pages 429, 447 and 449 are published pictures of Biruma or Brāma, Isuren (or Śiva) and Wischtnu (or Viṣṇu), upright standing gods, set in a pillared frame and signed by Aug. Voelckner delin.

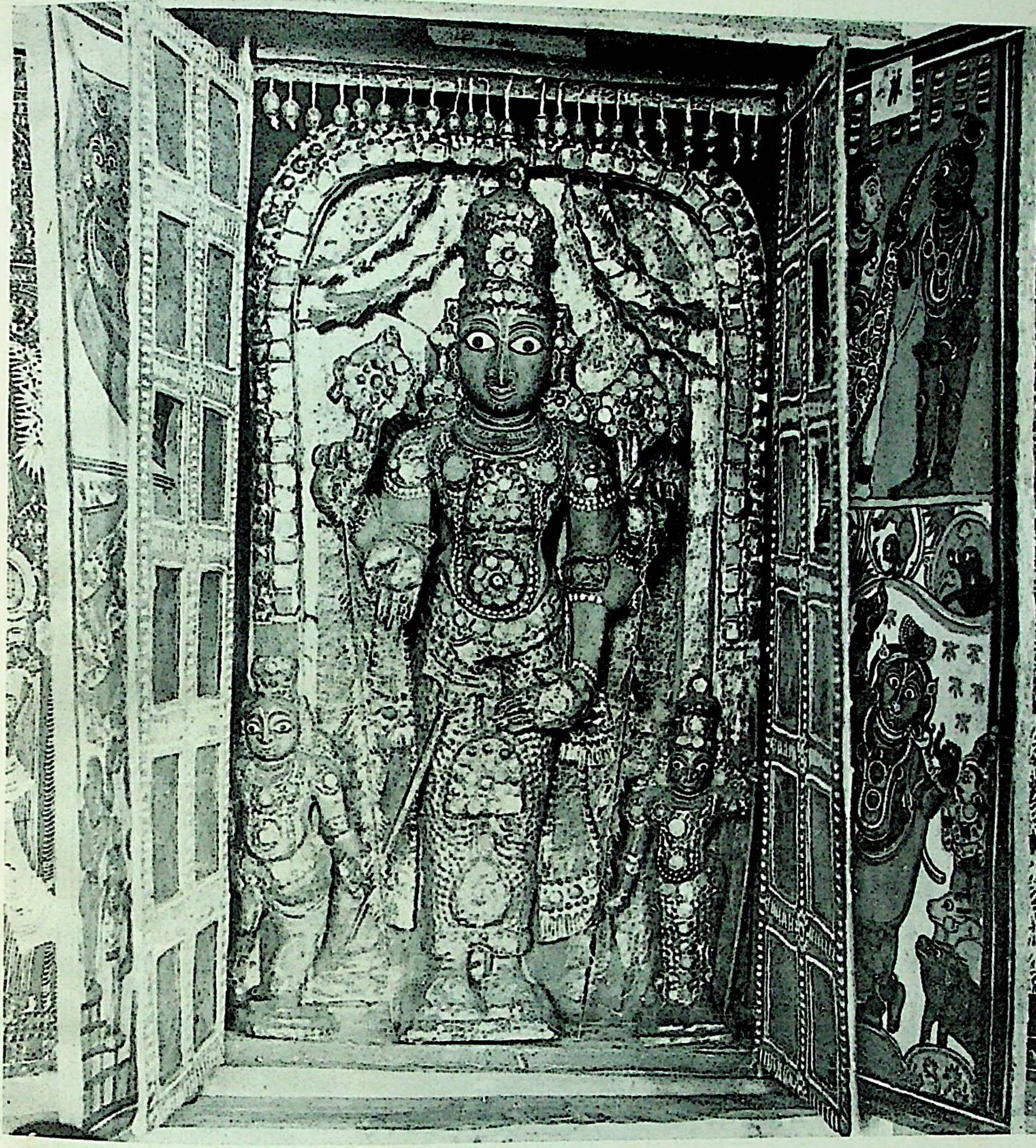
Schierlitz quotes in extenso the passages written by Ziegenbalg, refering to his attempts to find a suitable Indian painter to illustrate the figures of Indian gods described in his texts. All painters refused his request, as they were convinced, that Ziegenbalg would use their paintings for christian counter-propaganda against their religion. With great difficulty Ziegenbalg finally found a Brahman to copy figures of the gods from temples for him. The locality of the artist is of course disclosed by the seat of Ziegenbalg's mission Tranquebar near the eastern coast of South India, then a Danish possession in India.

It is known that La Croze wrote his History of Christianity in India with the help of Ziegenbalg's manuscripts preserved in the Halle missionary institution and that he had access to the pictures. It has been noticed by Schierlitz that the pictures of the Indian gods still existed at the time that Dr. Wilhelm Germann prepared his publication "Genealogy of the Malabarian Gods", Erlangen 1867. A remark by Germann indicates that he saw the copy with the fine coloured pictures in the library of the "Franckeschen Stiftungen" at Halle. But Germann unfortunately could not publish these illustrations along with the text. It would have been too costly. This seems to be the last mention of the series of paintings. They have been searched, but have not been traced.

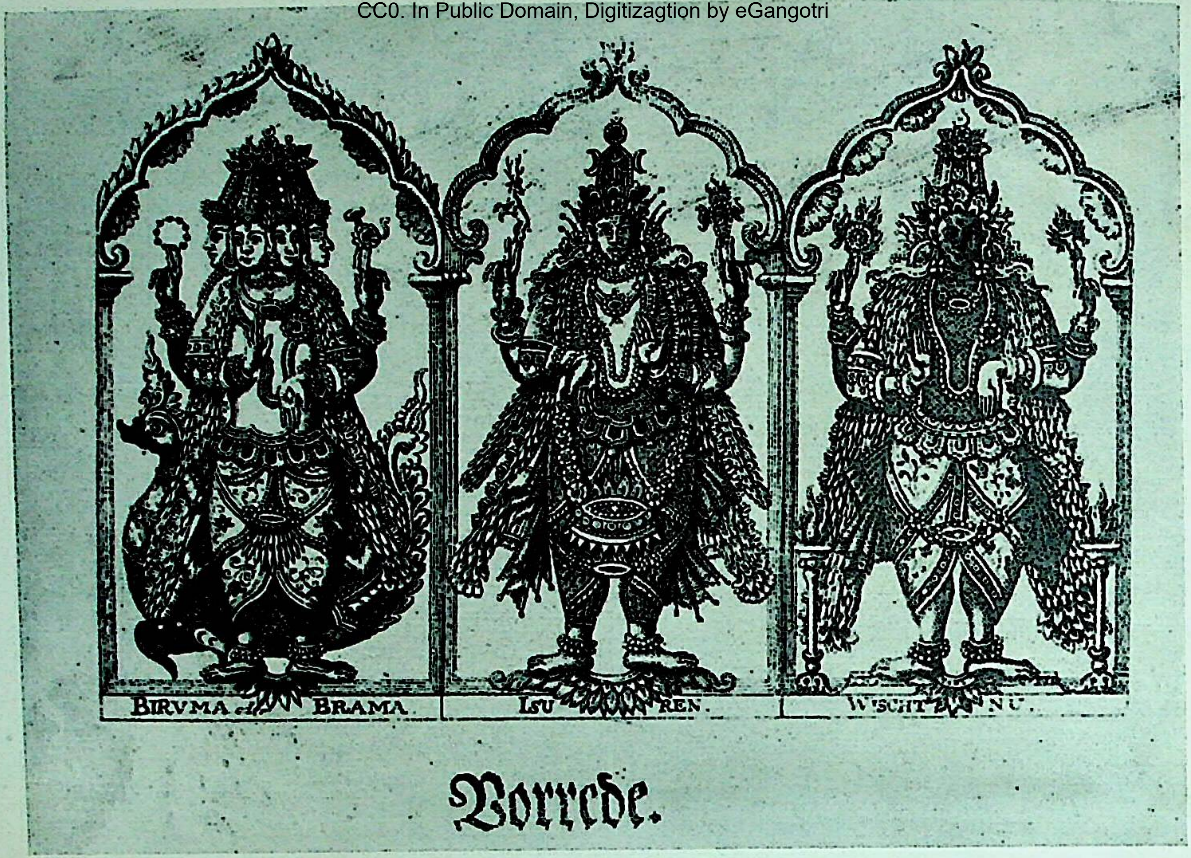
It is therefore highly probable, that La Croze—shortly after Ziegenbalg's death—used the Indian paintings and had them copied by a german artist. Even the colours of the paintings are given in the descriptions by Ziegenbalg, published by Germann and quoted by La Croze. Details are not repeated here, as they can be easily found in the books mentioned above and again in Schierlitz's book. It is indeed strange, that Partha Mitter should have missed this most important discovery. The publication of La Croze is of course one of the earliest to figure the three main Indian gods and that should have been sufficient reason to mention them.

As regards the Indian originals of such paintings, comparable materials have been published recently. Here I would only mention an important article by Lydia Icke-Schwalbe, "Betrachtungen zur volkstümlichen Hindukunst in Südost—Indien", Abhandlungen und Berichte des Staatlichen Museums für Völkerkunde Dresden, Band 31, Berlin 1970. She publishes a "picture-box"—earlier called "altar", from South India sent in the year 1734 by the missionary J. A. Sartorius to Halle. The box was purchased at Madras in 1733. Though not identical with Ziegenbalg's illustrations, the popular paintings of this "box" seem to derive from the same surroundings and roughly from the same period. A wooden sculpture of Viṣṇu in the innermost part of the box, painted and covered with mica-decoration may serve as an example. I may add, that this remarkable "picture-box"—a similar object is kept in Munich (Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde)—is one of the few roughly dated objects of Indian popular art in european collections and must have certainly contributed to the knowledge of Indian art in Europe. The Halle "picture-box" was exhibited in the so-called "Naturalien-Kabinett" of the Francke-Institution for the education of orphans.

Finally—to add something new to all that has been said so far—I like to point out a publication, which seems to have escaped all carlier authors, but which reproduces the three illustrations from La Croze united in one group, thus representing the "trinity" of Indian gods. The book refered to was edited by a professor of the Halle theological faculty, Johann Salomon Semler, part of a translation of a general history of the world, originally compiled by english savants. But Semler's publication under the title "Uebersetzung der Algemeinen Welthistorie der Neuern Zeiten..." was much enlarged by the learned professor's own notes and supplied with additional pictorial materials. The volume here refered to is the 5th part (Fünfter Theil) published in Halle in the year 1761. On page 3 is the picture just mentioned, evidently taken over from La Croze (with slight changes), but missing the signature of the designer. The writing under the images has been preserved, the French Biruma *ou* Brama has been changed to Biruma *oder* Brama.

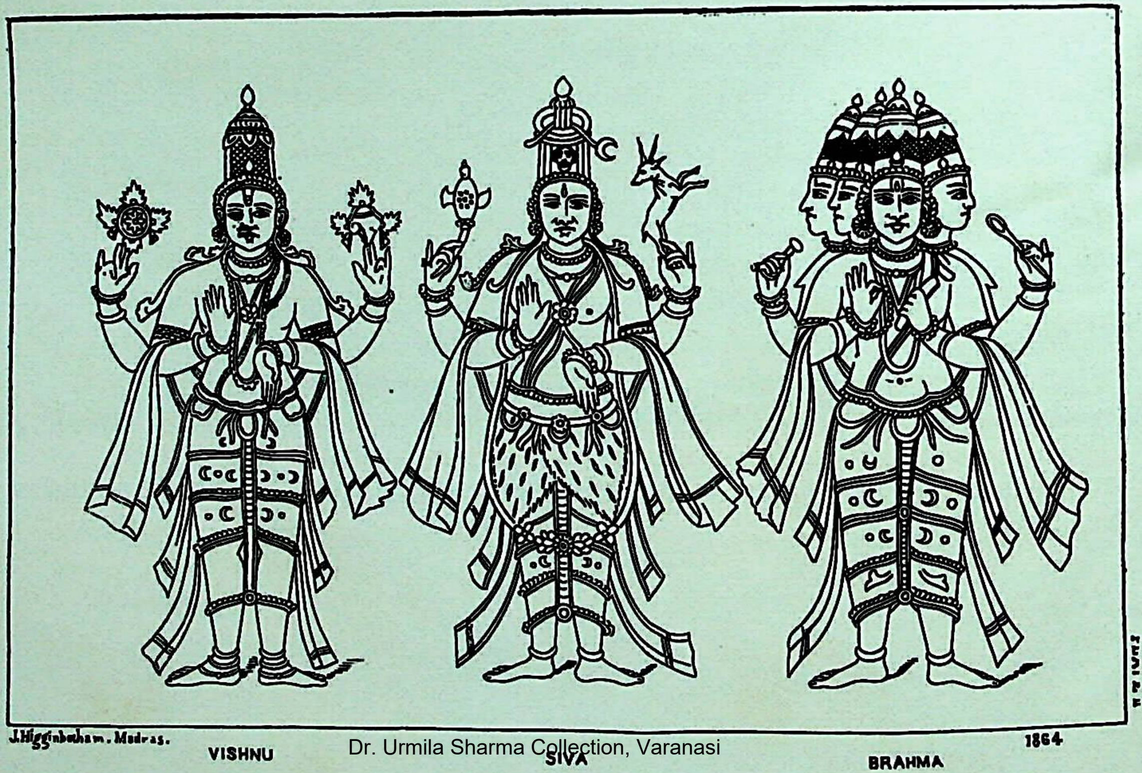


1. Viṣṇu, innermost figure, wood. Picture box, Halle, Franckesche Stiftungen, purchased at Madras in 17


BIRVMA ol BRAMA
ISU REN.
WSCHT NU.
Vorrede.

2. Brahmā, Śiva Viṣṇu. From J. S. Semler, Algemeine Welthistoric. Pt. 5 Halle 1761. P. 3.

3. The Three Gods as usually depicted. From E. Moor, The Hindu Pantheon, London 1810.


J.Higginbotham. Madras.
VISHNU
SIVA
BRAHMA
1864

IS ACTING AN ART ?*

GEORGETTE BONER

Acting gives visible and audible expression to a drama. In order to perform, the actor needs nothing else but his own body, made flexible by trainig and technical skill. Unlike musicians he is his own instrument and has to develop his body into a sensitive medium able to express visionary images.

Acting involves the metamorphosis of the actor himself. When interpreting a character on the stage, the actor's body with his two means of expression, movement and speech, becomes a creative power. Something new is born.

The actor is the magician calling forth a scenic creation. His real living presence is necessary. His person and his art are mutually dependent on each other. The same can be said of the dancer, the singer or the recitor and, in a modified way, of the musician playing an instrument.

Coquelin the elder (1841-1909), the great French actor wrote: "The arts differ according to the nature of their medium; the actor's medium is—himself. His own face, his body, his life is the material of his art; the thing he works and moulds to draw out another character. From this it follows that the existence of the comedian must be dual. One part of him is the performer, the instrumentalist; another, the instrument to be played on."

The fact that the whole body of the actor is involved in his creation makes acting especially difficult.

In the figurative arts some special material for working upon and realizing one's aim is needed. These artists transfer their inspiration onto clay, stone, wood, wall, canvas, gold, silver..

Works of art made in a lasting material become independant recipients of artistic inspiration. They may survive and even lose the identity of their creators, and yet retain their validity and transmit their message centuries later having been excavated or otherwise rescued from oblivion.

Another kind of detachment occurs for the poet whose medium is words and for the composer who uses sounds, harmonies and rhythms. Poetry and prose can be written down and thus transmitted to later generations. But their interpretation depends on another person, on the reader, recitor, performer, producer, conductor, singer or instrumentalist.

---

* I want to thank Mr. John Lumley for revising my English. GB

In the theatre performer and performance can never be separated. They remain united and bound to a special time and place. When the actor stands in the front of the footlights he discards his own personality and has to incorporate a stage character by means of his artistic genius and skill. At any given moment, not five minutes earlier or later, he must be ready with his whole personality, mind and body, movement and speech, to represent somebody else.

During the performance the actor is no longer directed by private reactions, no longer—himself. Transfiguration has begun. His life and art are not only neighbours, but live together in the same house, mingling and complementing each other. They are one, and at the same time they are two. This dualism makes the art of the theatre unique and fascinating.

No doubt, films, television and radio do in a way separate performer and performance. But this separation does not occur in the beginning, not in the process of creation. It happens only when the work is already created and reproduced for the public. Such modern technical developments, however, are beyond the scope of this essay.

The following anecdotes shall demonstrate the difficulties of creating a stage-character :

In the fourth century BC the Greek actor Polos in order effectively to express the despair of Electra, went to the extent by bringing an amphora containing the ashes of his own child onto the stage.

Ackermann, a German actor, used for days on end before a performance to behave in his own house like the character he was to play. When he was to appear as an emperor or a king he demanded court ceremonial at home. His wife and children had to address him as "Your Majesty". When he acted The Imaginary Patient, Le Malade Imaginaire, in Moliere's Comedy he put himself into the proper mood by staying in bed for a whole day before the first performance pretending to be sick and suffering.

When Fleury interpreted king Frederick the Great of Prussia he learned to play the flute because flute-playing was the hobby of the king. In this way he tried to find the right attitude of mind. He even went as far as calling his own house Sanssouci which was the name of the king's summer residence,

Coquelin describes a charming mishap in his own career (The Art of the Actor, p. 81-82) "Only once I was guilty of naturalism—unintentionally—and it is still a source of regret to me : I had spent the night in the train, rehearsed in the morning, and made some excursion on foot in the afternoon. I was very tired. That night I was playing Annibal in "Aventuriere". You know that at the end of the second act Annibal, whom Fabrice has been plying with drink to make him talk, gets tipsy and goes to sleep. I played the drunken scene as usual, neither more nor less, but when it came to sleep, the state I was mimicking seemed so sweet to me, I felt such longing for it that I allowed myself to be overcome : I fell to sleep on the stage, right in front of the audience. I even went so far as to snore. It was not according to the stage directions, but the audience listened, thought it was all in the part, and that I was putting in a bit of "business". Some of them laughed, others thought it in rather doubtful taste. There were many who said that I snored without grace, without truth, that I forced the note. Briefly, that I was not natural. Alas ! I was indifferent to both applause and blame."

One gruesome story tells of a performance of Shakespeare's Othello, when the vile traitor Jago played the perfidy of the character so convincingly that one of the spectators drew his pistol and shot him dead, only to repent immediately and kill himself. Both, the actor and the spectator, were buried in the same grave with the inscription : "To the ideal actor and the ideal spectator."

How many Comedies or Tragedies of errors in these few anecdotes ! They all—except Fleury's flute-playing which may have been helpful—show a confusion between life and art.

Life and the theatre are indeed interwoven. This may give the impression that acting is easy. But what a delusion. The actor's task of developing a special dualism makes his profession one of the most difficult of artistic vocations.

How can acting, embedded in human life, be lifted onto the plane of art ? It is most important for the actor to distinguish between his own daily life and that of the character he plays. He must draw a line of demarcation between the two. They should not interfere with each other. A convincing creation is only possible when the actor understands this fundamental duality.

In order to create and rehearse a stage character the actor has to control his proper "I", his "self", his personality, his body, his attitudes and expressions, even his voice. He has to free his mind from personal matters, preoccupations and inhibitions. There should be tranquillity in him, a sort of empty consciousness, ready to receive inspiration. Simultaneously his body becomes a neutral material and a neutral instrument, able to perform with the obedience of a puppet.

Now the actor is ready.

He has reached the neutral state, detached from his proper ego. He can duly rehearse. His imagination begins to conceive the stage-character which is to be produced. His body, now an obedient medium and instrument, is being transformed by creative forces. Artistic activity and sensitivity guide the actor's work.

In ancient Greece great festivals, harvests and victories were celebrated with music and words, dithyrambs and dance. In the Greece of the 6th and 5th century BC man had reached his culmination of creative activity. The theatre was a place of worship. The dithyramb, a chorus-song, composed by the famous citharist Arion, praised the souls of ancestral heroes.

Among the manifestations of that extremely religious epoch the cult of Dionysus gradually became supreme. Greek tragedy grew out of the chorus worshipping Dionysus. The dance of the chorus was executed with strictly ordered steps.

Dionysus was the god of growing and fading nature, of grapes and wine, of the forces which build up and destroy, of vegetation and cultivation, of everchanging life, of life before birth and after death, of light and darkness, of evolution and renewal, of expansion and exhilaration. He was the god of souls, appearing during the periods of light and disappearing during the periods of darkness. He revealed to mankind its origin. Dionysus allowed the individual to feel himself one with nature, to feel himself one unseparated particle of the universe and to merge himself in its harmony and unity.

The early theatres were not much more than a marked out dancing circle around an altar. The altar stood in the centre of that circle, called the orchestra, round which the spectators grouped themselves, leaving a wedge-shaped space open for the chorus of Dionysus' priests to come in a procession from the nearby temple to the altar in order to worship and to perform. Therefore we get as natural formation : in the centre the altar, round the altar the orchestra for the chorus and actors and rising tiers for the audience. The spectators sat on the sloping ground around the orchestra, where later on seats first earthen, then wooden and finally stone seats were erected in concentric rising circles.

The chorus walked or drove on a chariot into the holy precinct where the ritual took place. From the platform of the chariot steps led down to the orchestra. In later times a tent was erected on the chariot, then a wooden construction, the skene, a wardrobe for costumes, masks, cothurni, instruments and other props.

The dionysiac cult evoked ecstatic raptures in which the participants felt themselves transformed into other beings such as satyrs and maenads. A kind of drunkenness extinguished their personal life. Individuals merged into a superhuman world, when reciting narrative odes relating to the history of Dionysus or of other divine and heroic figures. The dithyrambic songs evoked happenings of ancient times. When singing had reached the maximum of intensity the vision in the song was transferred to the auditorium. The celebrated event became reality, immediate reality. It was no longer a thing of the past. The emotion spread and became general. When the peak of extasy was reached one of the chorus identified himself so completely with the celebrated hero that he stepped out of the line and impersonated him. In this very moment the art of acting was born.

Friedrich Nietzsche in "The Birth of the Tragedy", (Die Geburt der Tragödie), says : This is the fundamental phenomenon of dramatic action : to see oneself transformed and to act as if in another body and with another character... Magic transformation is at the root of all dramatic art.

It was Thespis, mythological actor, poet and manager, who brought this form of dramatic art to Athens, probably about the year 534 BC. His name was also given to the chariot which drove chorus and actors to the orchestra.

By stepping out of the line, inpersonating the hero, exchanging dialogue with the chorus and introducing a character called the answer Thespis did something new. He laid the fundamental basis for the great tragedies of Aeschylus (525-456), Sophocles (496-406) and Euripides (484-406). With Aeschylus began the greatest period of Greek tragedy. He completed the efforts of the early Attic tragediens. By introducing a second and a third actor he created a form of tragedy which became more independent of the chorus. With Sophocles and Euripides the dialogue and dramatic action predominated the chorus.

But how could this man, the protagonist, stepping out of the chorus, find the figure and form of the divine hero ? Dionysus gave the exaltation, but exaltation was not sufficient. At that the creative power of Apollo was needed. Apollo, the god of light, form, measure and harmony granted shape and reality to the ecstatic vision of the chorus. He raised an aspect of daily life to a superhuman plane. With the twin powers of Dionysus and Apollo final perfection was achieved.

The dithirambic songs of the chorus conjure the hero up from the realms of shadow to the realms of light. The doors of the underworld open. The ancestral hero returns to the world of the living. He appears as a new being, resurrected and purified.

Tragedy raises human suffering to a transcendental plane where man, freed from personal conflicts, finds inner tranquility and reconciliation with destiny. This creates both in the actor and in the spectator a sublime feeling of being relieved from one's own selfish emotions.

Aristotle uses the term Catharsis, purification, for the effects of tragedy on the spectators and actors. He maintains that tragedy tends to purify the audience, exciting emotions which relieve selfish passions.

The performance of Greek tragedies communicated Catharsis, purification and sublimation of feeling.

Greek tragedy stemmed from the cult of Dionysus. The liturgical drama and mystery-plays originated from the christian tradition.

In the Easter-liturgy two choirs alternately sing the Response : Quem quaeritis in sepulchro whom do you seek in the tomb ? The text is given in the Gospels : Matthew 28/1-1, Mark 16/1-7, Luke 24/1-12. The wording of the Response :

Whom do you seek in the tomb,
Jesus from Nazareth,
He is not here, he resurrected as he fortold.
Go and announce, that he resurrected from the dead.

A historical document of the 10th century, the Concordia Regularis, monastic rules, written in the years 963-984 by Bishop Aethelwold of Winchester, describes the symbolic development of the liturgical song.

Aethelwold urges the monks not only to sing the Easter-responses but to act them as well. Thus he starts the use of mimic to accompany the liturgy, an innovation which was adopted in many monasteries. He justifies the development by stressing the need both to animate the religious zeal of the christian community and to instruct the illiterate. His advice resembles the instruction of a modern stage-manager.

While the third lesson of the divine service is sung, four monks go out to change. One of them, now dressed in a white surplice, called the alb, reenters cautiously and walks towards the altar which represents the sepulchre of Christ. There he sits as an angel holding a palm-branch in his hand.

While the choir is singing the third response, the three other monks, now wrapped in dark cloaks, follow him, treading softly, swinging censors and—as if looking for something—approach the altar where their fellow monk is sitting.

All this is in imitation of the Angel at the Sepulchre and the three Maries who bring oil to anoint the dead body of Jesus. When the monk at the altar sees the three others approaching in search of something, he softly sings : For whom are you looking ? The three others answer : Jesus of Nazareth. Then the angel replies : He is not here. He has done as he foretold. Go forth and announce that he has risen from the dead.

After recieving the angel's order the three turn to the choir and sing : Alleluia. Our Lord has risen. Then the monk, representing the angel at the sepulchre, recalls them, singing : Come and see. With these words he gets up and lifting the veil, shows them the empty tomb. Having seen it, the three put the censors on the altar and sing : Our Lord has risen from the dead.

After this response the prior sings the hymn : Our Lord be praised...and thus expresses the joy felt at the return of our Lord and of his triumphant victory over death.

Then all the bells ring out.

It is likely that the monks representing the angel and the three Maries only mimed the singer's words in the beginning. Afterwards they began singing themselves the holy words.

With these instructions Bishop Aethelwold inaugurated liturgical plays for the clergy. It was courageous, no doubt, to introduce mime into the divine service. But most probably it answered a deep need in the human soul. Many monasteries adopted the innovation. As the ecclesiastical latin language was no longer understood by the layman the sense of the scripture could still be conveyed. The word became movement, dramatic action. Mimic art brought the holy texts to light. The monks became writers, actors, musicians, singers and stage-managers. The religious feeling of the community awakened.

The Easter-Response "quem quaeritis" had already been represented symbolically in the 10th century. The Passion-plays, which originated from the Planctus, the words of pain spoken by Mary standing beneath the Holy Cross, are documented subsequently. Later still, probably not before the 13th century, came the Nativity plays. As we know, it was Francis of Assisi who built the first symbolic crib in the vale of Rieti.

It was the Easter-message, announcing the resurrection which showed the way to represent the holy writ as theatre. This inspiration come neither from the incarnation, nor from the life and passion of Christ; but from his earthly death and his victory over death, his resurrection and ascent into glory. Was it due to the confrontation with the empty grave evoking the transcendental world ?

On Easter morning the three Maries come to the grave in order to anoint the dead body of Jesus. The stone is turned away from the tomb. The grave is empty. "Our Lord has risen", is thus the angel's message. From that time forth Christ can be neither seen nor heard through our mortal senses. He remains hidden.

With the story of the three Maries at the sepulchre a new perspective is opened, a new relationship created. Jesus must be looked for spiritually, as the Resurrected Christ. When Mary Magdalene approaches him he says : noli me tangere, do not touch me.

It was this Easter-message rather than the Nativity that inspired the first biblical plays. Searching in a new realm, where earthly place and time on longer exists, this was the beginning. The spoken or chanted word of the divine service became visible form. "While the third lesson is sung, four monks shall go out to change.." A transcendent vision initiated the liturgical plays.

Centuries of effort and enthusiasm have created the Japanese Nô-plays.

The word Nô means "to be able." But what are the Nô-plays, what is their character, their keynote ? Are they a performance, a theatrical show, a ritual ceremony, a court or popular dance, a dramatized ballad, a lesson in history, a concert, a kind of opera, a religious or a secular entertainment ?

It is difficult to say, because the Nô-play combines many different elements : speech, recitation, chanting, instrumental and vocal music, symbolic gestures, varied dances, rhythmical tapping accompanying words and movements, beating time with the stockinged foot, in syncopation with the main rhythm or coinciding with the beat. All these elements, combined and interwoven help to convey deep human emotions.

In a Nô-play there are only very few actors, not more than four or five, all men. The first actor is called Shite, meaning "Doer", the second Waki, "Assistent". Waki is the one who explains and comments. Both actors can have Adjuncts. The performers alternately dance, recite and speak. During Shite's principle dance, Waki silently "stands aside". This is what his name indicates.

The actors are supported by a chorus of about 14 musicians. They sit on the side and in the rear of the stage. While Shite dances the chanting of his part is done by the chorus, accompanied by a flute and drums. The Nô-music has no independent existence.

As interludes between the Nô-plays farces are given, known as kyogen, "wild words", in form of a dialogue between two men, generally master and servant. This exclusively secular entertainment, without musicians and chorus, gives relief from the strain of the elevated and solemm Nô-performance.

A similar relationship existed between the Greek tragedy and comedy.

The stage, covered by a roof of its own, is a square platform with a small recess at the rear. On the brownish backwall a painted pine-tree extends its wide branches. The other three sides are open. It is as if the pine-tree which always remains visible represents the everliving tradition of the Nô-theatre.

A bridge or gallery, the hashigakari, leads from the stage to the actors' dressing-room. The dressing-room is separated by a curtain. This curtain is raised when the actor makes his entry. Already from the hashigakari the actor in his marvelous make-up can project and radiate the essence of his part and thus take hold of the audience before even uttering a word. This extension of the Japanese stage is a unique asset. It widens the field of action and gives innumerable possibilities of expression.

A Nô-performance should have an introduction, a development and a climax. It begins with a dialogue which explains the background and introduces the whole drama. Three or more Nô-plays are given in a sequence. The first Nô should always contain words of good wishes.

The performances were given in many different places: palaces of great men, in temples as part of the ritual, in villages, in the open countryside, even in dry riverbeds.

The properties on the stage are reduced to almost nothing. A simple wooden frame-work may represent a palace, a house, a hut, a chariot, a boat, anything.

In contrast with that simplicity the actors' costumes are most elaborate and sumptuous. They give relief to the movements and attract everybody's attention. The use of masks is important but not general. Some of them are very precious and of great antiquity.

Arthur Waley in his book "Nô-play of Japan" (p. 53) says: "Nô does not make a frontal attack on the emotions. It creeps at the subject varily. For the action, in the commonest class of play, does not take place before our eyes, but is lived through again in mimic and recital by the ghost of one of the participants in it. Thus we get no possibility of crude realities; a vision of life, indeed, but painted with the colours of memory, longing and regret".

The Nô we admire today owes its form chiefly to two great actors: Kwanamy (1333-1384) and his son Seami (1363-1444). Kwanamy was a priest at the Kasuga temple near Nara. But when he received from his protector, the ruler Yoshimitsu, a small estate in Yamato he left the priesthood.

Kwanami's son Seami was not only a great actor, he was also author and composer of many of the Nô-plays he performed. Furthermore he wrote the Kwadensho, a treatise on the aesthetics of drama and the dramatic art for the instruction of his pupils. Kwadensho means "The Book of Handing on of the Flower". This title is an allusion to Zen-Buddhism. Seami stresses the necessity of secrecy. Teaching was and may still be throughout artistic traditions of the East a mystic initiation. The training of boys began at the age seven.

Seami's treatises by which he also transmitted his father's teachings concern the very centre of acting. Here some glimpses of the Kwadensho:

Again and again Seami stresses the importance of bringing the different elements of a performance into harmony. At the beginning the flute should play in order to put the audience into the right mood. But when speaking and singing has started, the musicians must listen intently to the actors' voices and, if necessary, "shadow" them. When two voices are not in accord, it is the flute-player's task to "bridge" them.

The actor makes his entry on the hashigakary and advances towards the stage. Then he must pause for a while and assess the atmosphere. When he has secured the audience's attention and begins to chant at the right moment, not too late, he can be sure that his opening words will produce the proper effect. The actor should detect the mood in the theatre at once and adapt himself to it. He must be able to vary his performance to suit both the atmosphere of the day and the performances of his fellow actors.

All the details of a performance have to correspond and belong together. If an "introductory mood" prevails in chanting, the dancing must continue in the same vein. Success depends on a proper harmonization of negative and positive moods.

But beware of too great a success. If everything the actor does delights, the audience will be in such a state of exaltation that the play beings to tire. The actor should never strain the feelings of the onlookers. He must hold himself back and restrain his movements and give people time to rest and breathe. Then he will regain his power over the hearts of the audience.

Restraint is very important. In representing anger the Nô-actor should retain some gentleness, else he will portray not anger but violence.

With regard to the word imitation Seami says: "The arts of music and dancing consist entirely in imitation" and in another passage: "In imitation should be a tinge of the unlike. For if imitation be pressed too far it impinges on reality and ceases to give the impression of likeness."

Two examples illustrate Seami's words.

In the Nô-play "Tokusa" the Shite is an old reaper from Shinano. Everybody was fond of the play and full of admiration for the acting in the reaper-scene. But once some actual reapers from Shinano were dissatisfied. It grieved them to see the Shite handling the sickle in an unfamiliar way. When the performance was over they showed him how true reapers set to work. When the Nô "Tokusa" was given again and the Shite did his reaping as he had been taught by the peasants, the performance was a failure.

If an actor, portraying an old man, simply walks with bent knees and back he may achieve the appearance of decrepitude, but at the expense of beauty. Proper artistic imitation will best be given by making all movements a little late, so that they come just after the musical beat.

It is not surprising that in this highly stylized art in order to avoid irreverent realism the parts of emperors and rulers were played by boy-actors.

In ghost-rôles the movements must delicately suggest "disappearing and coming-forth." This mysterious remark relates to an inner movement of the actor only visible to the spiritual eye. It is as if a new, a metaphysical dimension were created.

The term yugen occurs often in Seami's treatises. It means something hidden, something lying under the surface, the mysterious, the hint, the allusion rather than the statement. Its symbol is "a white bird with a flower in its beak." It can be applied to the most different qualities and events: to natural grace and to gentleness, to gestures and intonations, to acting and dancing, to music, chanting and singing, to moments of unforgettable beauty ... Such are the gateways where yugen can be experienced.

An actor's style should always remain simple, always graceful, easy, noble and full of yugen.

Seami explains that the flower, yugen, comes into existence in the contact between actor and audience, and that it consists in forcing upon the spectators an emotion which they do not expect.

In nature there is yugen, but it can be seen only by those who have the gift to see. In real art yugen is a hidden quality. If it is there, it can become visible and audible to an audience possessed of the right mood and feelings. If all goes well, the spark of inspiration is ignited and yugen, the flower, comes to life and blossoms.

The Nāṭyaśāstra[1] is a gigantic treasure-store of dramatic experiences and traditions. It could not have been written by one single author. Bharata Muni is a legendary figure incorporating the wisdom of many generations. It is therefore not possible to determine exactly the date of the Sāstra's origin. Dr. Manomohan Ghosh suggests after careful research that it already existed in the 2nd century AD. But the recorded traditions are so elaborate and comprehensive that they probably go back to a much earlier period.

This ancient Indian Canon of dramatic art, acting, play-writing and music contains rules as to how the exploits and activities of mortals and immortals have to be represented on the stage. It classifies and gives information about theatre-building, the stage and its decoration, the types and varieties of plays, their development, instrumental and vocal music, the word and its intonation, recitation, diction and speech, gestures, gaits, postures and dances, costumes and make-up, characters, temperaments, distribution of roles, emotions, representation (abhinaya), states (bhāvas), sentiments (rasa)...

In the thirtysix Chapters of the Nāṭyaśāstra nothing is left out. They represent a complete compendium of all the elements concerned with histrionics. But now we shall focus our attention only on Chapter One which describes the origin of Sanskrit drama, making use of Dr. Ghosh's English translation.

---

[1] The Nāṭyaśāstra, ascribed to Bharata Muni, translated into English with a commentary by Manomohan Ghosh, M. A. Ph. D., has been edited in two volumes by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Calcutta, Bibliotheca Indica between the years 1951 and 1961.

Nāṭya has been traslated as drama, essence of drama, Śāstra as manual of instruction.

In chapter one of the Nāṭyaśāstra sages come to Bharata Muni and question him about the origin of the drama. Bharata, the master of dramatic art (the word Bharata meant also actor), before answering, bows reverently to the god Brahmā and Maheśvara Śiva. Having finished his prayers he narrates the story of the first dramatic performance :

When the Golden Age, Krita-yuga, passed and the Silver Age, Treta-yuga, began, people became addicted to sensual pleasures and found their happiness mixed with sorrow. The gods with Indra at their head approached Brahma and said : "We want an object of diversion, which must be audible as well as visible. Please create another Veda."

"Let it be so", said Brahma and, dismissing the deputies, resorted to concentration of mind and recalling the four Vedas, he decided : I shall make a fifth Veda on the Nāṭya. This Nāṭyaveda shall be conducive to duty, wealth and fame, contain good councel and give guidance and teaching of scriptures and review all arts and crafts (śilpa). Thus, from his memory of all the four Vedas Brahma shaped the Nāṭyaśāstra (Nāṭyaveda).

After having created the Nāṭyaśāstra Brahma said to Indra, the Lord of gods : "I have composed semi-historical tales. Now get them dramatized and acted by gods. Pass the fifth Veda on to them who are skilful, learned, free from stage-fright and accustomed to hard work." But Indra bowed to him and said in reply : "The gods, originating from the Golden age, are unfit to do anything with the drama. It is preferable to give it to the sages who know the mystery of the Veda, have fulfilled their vows and understand human nature and character. They are capable of putting the Nāṭyaśāstra into practice."

On these words of Indra Brahma said to me, Bharata : "Yo will have to put the Nāṭyaśāstra to use." Thus ordered I studied the Canons of Drama and their proper application and assigned to my hundred sons different roles suitable to them.

After that preliminary work I prepared a performance adopting three dramatic styles : the Verbal, the Grand and the Energetic. Brahma, not yet satisfied, asked me to include the Graceful, Kaiṣikī style. Whereupon I replied : "This style cannot be practised without the help of women. Please give me the means for putting it to use." Therefore the powerful Brahman created apsaras, nymphs, and gandharvas, celestial musicians.

When I mastered the dramatic art I asked for Brahma's orders. To this Brahma answered : "A very suitable time for the production of a play has come. The Banner Festival in honour of Indra's victory over the Daityas and Asuras, the enemies of the gods, has just begun."

In this festival gods were assembled in great number to form the audience to which I and my troupe performed the first production of a play. It started with the holy benediction and blessings. Afterwards we showed Daityas fighting against the gods. The audience was highly statisfied with the performance and the gods rewarded the actors and presented all sorts of gifts in appreciation. Indra too was pleased and donated his lucky banner with each god following with one of his most suitable and characteristic emblems : Sūrya, the sun-god, gave an umbrella, Vāyu, the wind-god, a fan....

The performance continued with the fight against the Daityas and Asuras. At the instigation of the Vighnas (malevolent spirits) some Daityas arrived uninvited to watch the play. All of a sudden their leader exclaimed : "Come on we cannot tolerate this dramatic display." The Vighnas then used their supernatural power and paralysed the speech and movements as well as the memory of the actors. Their obstruction worked. The play was spellbound.

In the face of this injury, Indra resorted to meditation and found out that the break in the performance was due to the Vighnas who had rendered the sūtradhāra, the director, and the actors senseless and inert. He rose and with eyes turning in anger, took up his best banner-staff and beat the Vighnas to death.

Indra then said triumphantly : "Hence forward my Banner-staff will be the protection of all actors."

Then the performance continued. But again the remaining Vighnas began to create terror for the actors. So I approached Brahma once more and said : O, most blessed of gods, the Vighnas are determined to destroy our dramatic performance. Please, help us to protect ourselves."

Hence Brahma asked Viśvakarman, the architect of the gods, to build carefully a playhouse of the best type. Viśvakarman constructed such a theatre. Then Brahma together with Indra and the other gods had a look at it and found it fine. And Brahma said to the gods : "You ought to cooperate in the protection of the playhouse in its several parts, each according to his abilities : Chandra, the Moon-god, to protect the main building; the Lokapālas, guardians of the worlds, its sides; the Maruts its four corners; Varuṇa the space within the building." Brahma himself occupied and protected the middle of the stage, where flowers are scattered at the beginning of each performance. This play-house was indeed an image of the world.

When this distribution had been organized the gods said to Brahma : "First you should pacify the Vighnas by conciliation. Only it this proves unsuccessful should other means be applied such as making gifts, creating dissention among the enemies and lastly force."

Hearing this advice Brahma called out to the evil spirits and asked : "Why are you trying to spoil our theatre ?" Whereupon the Daityas and the Vighnas answered : "The knowledge of the dramatic art, the Nāṭyaśāstra, which you created at the wishes of the gods shows us up in an unfavourable light. You did it for the sake and benefit of the gods. This you should not have done because you are first progenitor of the world from whom have emerged all the gods as well as all Daityas".

These words being uttered, Brahma answered : "Enough of your anger, o Daityas. Give up your grievances and your sorrow. I shall prepare Nāṭyaśāstra which will take everyone's ideas into account and thus, I shall determine your luck, whether good or ill, and that of the gods". So much for the first performance.

Some concluding reflections. From the Nāṭyaśāstra, Chapter One, 7-12, we learn :

In the Golden Age theatre did not exist. Celestial harmony reigned. When in the Silver Age the knowledge of the Vedas was no longer accessible for everybody, drama, an audible and visible diversion, was created as a new means of education.

The first dramatic performance commemorated Indra's victory over the Daityas for an audience of celestial beings. It was a dialogue between this world and the world beyond, vision and worship. The Daityas were shown as defeated. The defeat as a "semi-historical" fact had happend.

The powers of darkness were offended by this dramatic exaltation of the victory. They felt themselves represented only as the defeated. Therefore they made havoc among the actors. On the request of the gods Brahma evoked the evil spirits.

The speech for the defence of the Daityas and the Vighnas stated that Brahma is the progenitor of the whole world, of good as well as of evil. The Daityas claimed that the performance has put them in an unfavourable light. Their words provoked a basic religious and philosophical problem.

Brahma, accepting their defence, replied : "Enough of your anger, Daityas. Give up your grievances and your sorrow..." and he prepared the fifth Veda. Thus he reconciled the powers of darkness with the powers of light. Supreme wisdom created justice.

From now onward in a dramatic action, representing the whole world, the Daityas have the same chance to express themselves and the same right to develop and change like the Devas.

When drama is all-embracing it leads mankind. It is a means of education and instruction. It gives relief to the lucky and the unlucky, to the successful and the unsuccessful, to the joyful and the suffering. Those who are in the shadow are treated the same as those who are in the light.

Drama is an image of the world and a vision of the supreme powers. Hence a theatrical performance should not be held without worshipping the deities of the stage.

Thus the sacred wisdom of the Nāṭyaśāstra.

INDEX

Aeschylus 197
aesthetics (Indian) 9, 11, 19 ff., 26, 168; (of drama) 200
Aethelwold of Wichester 198
Agni 15 f., 29, 31, 42
Agrawal, R. C. 89, 90, 91
Ajitāgama 146, 147, 149, 150, 165
ākāśa 167
Alla ud din Khan 9
ānanda 13, 19, 21
antelope 35 ff.
Aparājitapṛcchā 121, 165
Apollo 197
Aristotle 197
Āstikajaratkāru 103 ff.
Ātman 12, 14 f.
avatāra 46
avyakta 14, 28, 30
Balarāma 87
Banerji, R. D. 105
Barabudur 46, 132, 140 f.
Bernet-Kempers, A. J. 131, 160, 166
Berve, H. 141, 166
Bhagavad Gītā 42
Bhāgavata Purāṇa 180
Bhubaneswar 99 ff.
Bharata : see Nāṭya Śāstra
Bhatt, N. R. 147
Bhattacharya, Benoytosh 101
Bhattacharya, B. C. 89, 96, 97, 98
Bhattacharya, Tarapada 75
Bhattasali, N. K. 103, 105
bhūta (*bhūta-praṇāla*) 128, 141 ff., 150, 152 f., 155, 159, 161
bindu 25, 57, 82
Boisselier, J. 166
Boner, Alice 1 ff., 7 f., 9, 28, 57, 58, 99, 106, 187
Bosch, F. D. K. 99
Brahman 12, 13, 14, 19, 28, 30 f., 37
Brāhmaṇas 18 f., 22, 23, 26, 32
brahma-sūtra 23
Brahmavaivarta Purāṇa 103
Brown, Percy 141, 165
Buddha 27, 49 ff., 89, 91, 93 f., 96, 97
Buddhism 49 ff.
cakra 18, 23, 52 ff.
Caland, W. 18
Calukya 120, 126, 127 ff., 163
Cālukya 129, 130, 139, 153
Cambodia 46, 132 ff.
Campā 132 f.
Caṇḍeśa 144, 145
Cārvāka 12
catharsis 197
Chāndogya Upaniṣad 22
Christian mystery-plays 197 ff.
Citrasūtra (Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa)
Coḷa 26, 127, 145, 148, 149 ff.
Coomaraswamy, A. K. 4, 22, 32, 57, 93, 176
Cousens, H. 156
Dahmen-Dallapiccola, A. L. 176 ff.
Dakṣa 35 ff.
Dakṣiṇāmūrti 96
Dandekar, R. N. 18
De, S. C. 99
De, S. K. 11
Devakunjari, D. 113
Dharma 20, 51 ff.
dhyāna 105, 177 ff., 187
dhyāna-mudrā 101

- *dhyānarūpa* 28
- Dhyānī-Buddhas 52 ff., 101
- *dhvani* 11, 34
- Dionysus 196, 197
- drama 1, 11, 19 ff., 27, 193 ff.
  - Greek drama 196 ff.
- Durgā Mahiṣāsuramardinī 62 ff., 105
- *dvārapāla* 62, 64, 69, 76, 101 f.
- Ebeling, K. 176 ff.
- Elūrā (Ellora) 4 f., 25, 59-85, 161, 163
- Euripides 197
- Falk, Maryla 30 ff.
- Filliozat, V. 113
- Form 13 ff., 23 ff., 27 ff., 61
- *gaṇas* 64, 71 ff., 83 f., 89, 97 f., 142, 161
- Gāndhāra 51, 65, 68 f., 80, 87
- *garbha-gṛha* 120
- Germann, W. 190
- *ghaṭa* 100 ff., 143 f.
- Ghosh, M. M. 21, 202
- Gnoli, R. 11
- Goetz, H. 93
- Gonda, J. 18
- Gopinatha Rao, T. A. 67, 75
- *grāha* (sea-monster) 121, 124, 138 f.
- *grāsa* 132, 137, 138 f., 141, 159 f., 163
- Gruben, G. 141, 166
- *guṇas* 17, 24, 25
- Gupta 43, 87-98, 136 ff.
- Gupta-Vākāṭāka 121, 134
- Gurjara Pratihāra 42, 44
- Havell, E. J. 1
- Heesterman, J. C. 18
- Henry, V. 18
- Hiraṇyagarbha 45
- Hiriyanna, M. 11, 19
- Hoysaḷa 130, 164
- Icke-Schwalbe, L. 190
- *indriyāṇi* 13 ff.
- Irwin, John 29
- Īśānaśivagurudeva-paddhati 147, 165
- *jagatī*-platform 119, 121 f., 130, 132, 139, 143, 144, 159
- Jaina 119, 124, 129, 132, 134, 163
- *jambhaka* 141 f.
- Jaratkāru 104 ff.
- Jātakas 49, 87
- Jāvā 121, 126, 131 f., 139, 141, 159 f., 162
- Jina Pārśvanātha 119, 123, 156
- *kalā* (art) 22
- *kalaśa* 45 f.
- Kālidāsa 41, 97, 126
- Kalinga 124, 126, 127, 143
- Kāraṇāgama 147, 150, 165
- Kārttikeya 35, 65, 67, 69 f., 88, 94 f., 98
- Kāśī Khaṇḍa (Skanda Purāṇa) 88 ff.
- Kāśyapaśilpa 146, 147, 150, 165
- Kathakali 1, 9
- *kāvyapuruṣa* 33
- Khajurāho 43, 123, 142, 162
- *kīrttimukha* 141, 187
- Koṇārka 124, 187
- Kramrisch, Stella 4, 22, 33, 57
- Krishan, Y. 99
- Krishna 42, 88 ff.
  - Govardhan-dhārī 88 ff.
  - Bālakrishna 94
- Kṣemakarṇa 176, 178, 179
- Kubera 97
- *kuṇḍa* 119
- Kushāna 44, 87, 90, 91, 93, 121, 134
- Lakṣaṇa-samuccaya 145
- Lakṣmī 41, 45, 62, 70, 187
- Lawrence, A. W. 141, 166
- *liṅga*, Śivaliṅga 37, 44, 63, 69, 76, 87, 94, 102, 119, 120, 151, 159, 161
- Longhurst, A. H. 113
- Mahabalipuram 44, 128, 141
- Mahābhārata 35, 41, 43
- Mahāyāna 49 ff.

Maitraka 42
Maity, P. K. 103, 105, 106
makara 61, 121 ff.
makara-matsya 134
makara-praṇāla 121 ff.
Mālava 122 f., 161, 163
Mallayya, N. V. 148, 165
Manasā 103 ff.
Mānasāra 146, 147, 165
maṇḍala 4, 49-55
mantra 4, 169
Mātṛkā (see also Sapta-Mātṛkāḥ) 95, 105
Mahā-Gūrjara 144
Maru-Gūrjara 121 f., 145
Mathura 42, 65, 69, 79, 89, 91 ff., 132, 134 f.
Mayamata 146, 147 ff., 165
Mehta, R. N. 91
Michal, H. 166
Mitter, Partha 189 ff.
mudrā(s) 52 ff.
Mughal painting 181
Mus, Paul 27 ff.
music *(saṅgīta)* 20, 25, 33, 168 ff., 180 ff., 199 ff.
nāda 31, 33
Nāga 26, 43, 88, 99 ff., 160
nāgabandha 26
Nāgarāja 143
nāgī (nāginī) 99 ff.
nāma-rūpa 15, 19, 30 f.
Nāṭya-Śāstra 11 ff., 19 ff., 27, 83, 202 ff.
Nepal 41 ff.
Nietzsche, F. 197
Nô-play 199 ff.
OM 31, 44, 167, 180
Padma Purāṇa 187
Pahari painting 175 ff.
Pāla 41, 124
Pallava 128, 131, 142, 150
pañcadeva pūjā 187
Pandeya, C. 11
Panigrahi, K. C. 100 f.
pañjara 23, 24, 187
Parmentier, H. 166
Parpola, A. 18
Pārvatī 62 ff., 98
paśu 38
Pāśupata 36, 145
Paśupati 35-38
pīṭhikā 120, 159, 161, 163
pradakṣiṇa patha 52, 62, 71, 96
Prajāpati 35 ff.
praṇāla 119-164
Praśna Upaniṣad 16
pratīka 28 ff.
pratimā 29 f.
Pratimā Lakṣaṇa 187
pratirūpa 27, 30 ff.,
pūjā 21, 46 f., 104, 187
Purāṇas 35, 38, 88, 110
pūrṇakumbha 45
Puruṣa 12, 17, 27-34, 41 ff.
Puruṣa-Sūkta 12, 13, 27
puruṣārthas 17, 20
Rāga 169 ff., 176 ff.
Rāgamālā 169 ff., 175 ff.
Rāginī 177 ff.
Raghavan, V. 11
Rai Krishna Das 87 ff.
Raju, P. T. 12
Rajasthani painting 177, 181
Rāmāyaṇa 109
Rama Sharma, M. A. 113
Randhawa, M. S. 176 ff.
Rasa 11, 15, 19, 20, 23, 34, 61, 83 f., 168 f.
Rāṣṭrakūṭa 129, 139, 161, 163
Rāvaṇa 62 ff.
Ray, N. R. 13, 22, 32

Ray, P. K. 103
Renou, L. 27, 29, 33
Rhys Davids, C. A. F. 50
Rudra 35 ff., 42
rūpa 15, 19, 29 ff.
Ṛgveda 15, 18, 20, 27, 41, 43, 45
sacrifice 18 ff., 27 ff., 35 ff., 42
Śaka-Kuṣāṇa 121, 132, 136, 141
Samāraṅganasūtradhāra 121, 144, 165
saṅgīta : see music
Sapta Mātṛkāḥ 62 ff., 101, 108
Sarkar, H. 155, 158, 159, 165
Śarmā, Sadāśiva Rath 4 f., 99
Sarnath 87 ff., 137
Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 18, 35 ff.
Satyanārāyaṇa (mūrti) 187
Schierlitz, E. 189 ff.
Semler, J. S. 191
Seünadeśa style 122
Seüna-kuntala style 164
Sewell, R. 113
Sharma, Prem Lata 33
Sharma, S. 13
Śilpa 187
Śilpa Śāstra 5, 187
Śiva 35 ff., 44 ff., 62 ff., 88, 94, 96, 103, 106, 110, 167, 175, 189
Sivaramamurti, C. 57, 67
snāpana-gṛha 144 f.
snāpana-vidhi 120
Sophocles 197
Śrī 41
śrīvatsa 41
Śrī Laṅkā 130, 139, 151
śruti (in music) 24, 169 ff.
Staal, J. F. 19
Stadtner, D. 89
stambha (skambha) 18, 21, 29, 101
sthapatis 57, 187
Stūpa 25, 46, 52, 64, 132, 141
symbol, symbolism 18, 21, 28 ff., 38, 41, 46, 52, 58, 63, 84, 143
Tagore, Rabindranath 2
tāla (in music) 21, 24, 25
tāla (measurement) 75
Taittirīya Āraṇyaka 12
Taittirīya Saṃhitā 43
Taittirīya Upaniṣad 12, 19
Tantrasamuccaya 158 f., 165
tapas 12, 14 f., 17, 33, 82
Thespis 1 7
time 18, 26, 35, 36, 45, 61, 63, 82, 167
toraṇa 156, 187
udadhikumāra 123, 164
Udayana (Nyāyakusumāññjali) 41 f
Uday Shankar 1 ff.
Upaniṣads 13 ff., 17 ff, 23 f., 27 ff.
  Aitareya 15 ff.
  Katha 14 ff.
  Kena 13 ff.
  Muṇḍaka 15 f.
Varāha 43, 70, 92
Varanasi (Banaras) 87-98, 135
Vāstupuruṣa 33
Vāstu-Śāstra 120, 121, 139, 145, 146, 158, 165
Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad 28 ff.
Vasu, Nagendranath 105
Vatsyayan, Kapila 23 f., 31
Veda 11 ff., 20, 21, 24, 31, 41, 46
  Atharvaveda 13, 18, 20, 29
  Sāmaveda 20
  Yajurveda 13, 18, 20
Veyssiere de La Croze, M. 189 ff.
vidyādhara, vidyādharī 64, 73, 82, 104, 124, 129 f., 144
Vijayanagara 109 ff., 153, 157, 161
Vaiṣṇavism 108
Vishnu 42 f., 46, 62, 92, 98, 189 f.
Viśvakarmā (author) 121, 145
Viśvarūpa 17, 33, 41-47
vyāla 130, 139, 151, 157, 158 ff.
Waldschmidt 176, 177, 179
Waley, Arthur 200
yajña 18, 21
Yakṣa 87, 97, 99
yantra 4, 22, 168, 170
Yoga 15, 17, 20, 22, 168
Yūpa 21, 28, 31
Ziegenbalg, Bartholomeus 189 ff.

ed art
ing st
which
relativ
Krish
Gupta
as di
Sarna
early
Donal
graph
Mana
Two
Georg
the sa
plann
gives
Platfo
explai
and ri
or gar
of thi
not o
Asian
archit
specia
Rāgar
betwe

आ
भरत